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## Smokejumper Magazine, July 2000

National Smokejumper Association

Gregg Phifer

Neil Shier

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THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER  
ASSOCIATION

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
JULY 2000

# SMOKEJUMPER



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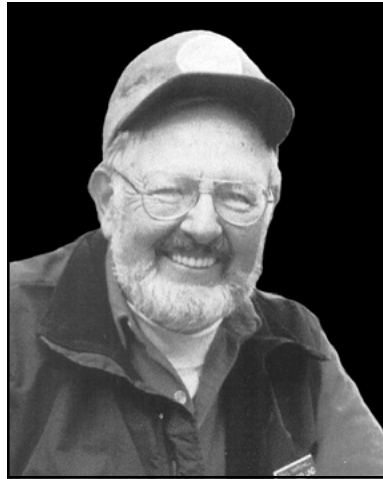
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Cover: (L-R) *Skip Stratton, Ed Eggen, Bill Dratz and Bill Hellman* in front of National Press Building June 28, 1949. (Photo courtesy Skip Stratton)

## The Prez's Perambulations



By Carl Gidlund  
(Missoula '58)

PRESIDENT

### Fellow Jumpers and Associates:

YOUR NSA IS growing. We gained 322 men and women during the past year, bringing us to 1,450 members. Some 1,339 are smokejumpers; the balance, Associates. Our rolls now include 26 percent of the 5,243 smokejumpers who have been trained by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management since the program began in 1939.

Although it's impossible to cite specific factors, the Executive Committee's decision to conduct bi-monthly meetings at active jumper bases has been one reason for your Association's growth. In conjunction with those meetings, we've sponsored socials for area jumpers, their spouses and Associates. That "showing the flag" has, we believe, raised awareness of the NSA and its activities.

The continuous improvements in our quarterly magazine and on our World Wide Web site have also contributed. In addition,

a program we initiated last winter through that Web site to help "wannabes" become smokejumpers has greatly strengthened our Associate membership base.

Another new program, one that will provide smokejumper "handles" to NSA members who use computers, is coming on line. You'll find a brief description of it in this magazine and a fuller set of directions on our Web site. We believe that's an incentive that will especially appeal to younger jumpers.

The Executive Committee's decision to provide free one-year memberships to rookie jumpers will pay long-term dividends, we believe. Many who might not have considered belonging may "re-up," helping infuse the Association with new ideas and young energy.

The Board of Directors also believe that men and women are attracted to the NSA because they see we're doing things. During the year, we completed production of a two-hour video that's the definitive history of smokejumping. We're also collecting documents, photos and artifacts for preservation, interpretation, research and display. And, our wilderness trail rehabilitation program is growing.

This is my valedictory as NSA president. By the time you read this, the Redding 2000 Reunion will be concluded along with our yearly Board of Directors meeting. A new leader and Executive Committee will have been elected and appointed. I'll continue to serve the Association in a small way, by writing for and

helping edit the magazine and contributing to the Web site, but the NSA's future is in their hands and yours.

Please support your new leaders as they help the organization grow and contribute to the betterment of the fire fighting community, our nation's wildlands and society as a whole. Among the new leadership team's initiatives is a long-range planning effort that will develop a clearer focus on our goals and chart a course for our future. That vision also may help attract donations and grants. Let them know your thoughts.

Here's another opportunity: If you enjoy and

benefit from your association with the NSA, sign up a jump "bro" or a friend. Half-price gift memberships are available to members.

It's been a pleasure serving you and getting to know many jumpers and Associates with whom I'd not been acquainted before my term began. Like many NSA members, I've worked exciting jobs, sometimes in exotic locales, with intelligent and daring folks. But my closest and most precious friends are smokejumpers. You're an odd lot, but my kind of people.

Keep 'er into the wind, pard, and we'll see you down the trail. 🐾

## Jumping into History

By Sherry Devlin of the Missoulian

Fifty-one years ago, Washington, D.C. got a drop-in visit from smokejumpers.

*"There won't be a forest fire, but if President Truman happens to glance out the window of the White House next Tuesday noon, he will see smokejumpers from Region 1 landing on a patch of grass a few hundred yards off. The show on the Ellipse, between the Washington Monument and the White House, will mark the first time that smokejumpers ever have been dropped east of the Mississippi River. An Old-time Tri-Motor plane, with Bob Johnson, veteran of uncounted aerial rescues, at the controls, will be used to show the Easterners how it's done."*

*Missoulian, Thursday, June 23, 1949*

They were war veterans—sturdy, reliable young men who studied forestry on the GI Bill and parachuted to forest fires when school let them out for the summer. Ed Eggen had 24 jumps to his credit, including one from a crippled B-17 over Berlin. He spent six months in a German POW camp. Bill Dratz was a combat engineer with Gen. George C. Patton during the war. Skip Stratton was a test pilot. Bill Hellman was an air service

veteran too, and the father of a brand-new baby boy. They never knew why they were the jumpers picked to "show the Easterners how it's done," but they were eager for the opportunity.

"I was born and raised in Missoula and had never been to Washington, D.C.," said Stratton, who kept a scrapbook of photographs, newspaper clippings and letters from the historic jump. "Heck, before the war, I



*After parachuting to the Ellipse, the smokejumpers are officially welcomed to Washington, D.C. Note the White House in the background. (L-R) Bill Hellman, Skip Stratton, Bill Dratz, and Ed Eggen. (Photo courtesy U.S. Forest Service)*



Suiting up in hanger prior to jump. (L-R) Bill Dratz, Skip Stratton, Bill Hellman, Ed Egan. (Photo courtesy Skip Stratton)

had never been anywhere but Spokane.”

So they stuffed their gear into the Ford Tri-Motor used in those days to transport smokejumpers to backcountry fires, and left Missoula's Hale Field for the capital. Bob Johnson was at the controls. Bud Carls, a mechanic for Johnson Flying Service, was in the co-pilot's seat, responsible for maintenance and navigation. Photographer Robert Catlin and spotter Al Cramer were also on board

It took the slow-flying Tri-Motor three days to reach Washington. "If we got a head wind, we could see cars and trains passing us down below," Stratton said. Top speed was about 90 mph. Johnson wasn't accustomed to paved runways. "Back home, everything was dirt or gravel," Stratton said. "So he'd land on the grass and then taxi to the runway. He figured the pavement was too hard on the tires anyway."

*There were strange goings-on yesterday in the shadow of the Washington Monument. At 1p.m. an intense belch of smoke erupted on the Ellipse grounds. An old tri-motored plane flew over at about 900 feet and two men parachuted out. The plane made a second pass and two more men hit the silk. It wasn't an invasion, it was the U.S. Forest Service demonstrating how its smokejumpers fight forest fires in remote sections of the West".*

Washington Post, Wednesday, June 29, 1949

The demonstration jump made history by taking smokejumpers east of the Mississippi River and into a big city. More importantly, it made an impression on hundreds of business executives and news reporters gathered in the capital to fete the Forest Service's wildfire prevention efforts. The Forest Service hoped to inspire continued support of its fire prevention work and smokejumper program. Thus the plan to drop four smokejumpers onto the Ellipse that connects the Washington Monument and the White House.

"As we circled the jump spot, we could see people coming out of the buildings," said Stratton. "They looked like ants." Cramer was worried about the wind and an approaching thunderstorm so he told Johnson to take the plane

down lower.

They were about eye level with tourists peering out of the Washington Monument. "We were waving at each other," Stratton said.

Stratton was the first out of the plane, followed by Dratz. "Bill's parachute inverted, so he couldn't get hold of the guidelines," Stratton said. "He almost didn't get in." Hellman and Eggen followed on the next pass.

The jumpers were descended upon by dozens of newspaper, radio and television reporters. They then climbed aboard a pair of convertibles for a ride down Pennsylvania Avenue and a lunch at the Press Club.

"It was our five minutes in the limelight. Then we went home and got back to work," said Stratton.

Skip Stratton was 27 when he made headlines with his historic parachute ride. Bill Hellman was 23. Ed Eggen and Bill Dratz were 26. All but Eggen were married men with young families. Of the four jumpers, only Eggen and Stratton are still living. Dratz died of cancer a few years ago. Hellman, along with 11 other jumpers, died six weeks later at Mann Gulch. Eggen returned to his native Wisconsin. Skip Stratton is currently living in Missoula. 🌲

*This article was printed with the permission of the author and edited for length by Smokejumper magazine.*

# Robert L. Caldwell: Model, Friend, and Colleague

By Bob Gara (McCall '51) and Bob Evans (Idaho City '53)

**B**umper stickers sometimes make sense. A fitting one is "Growing old ain't for sissies." Bob Caldwell (McCall '46-'47; Idaho City '48-'58), fought it out with Parkinson's Disease until July 9, 1998, when he died, only in his early 70s.

We asked his widow, Marguerite, his birthday or age when he died and she said she didn't know either. On his headstone she answered "Born?" with "yes." Caldwell humor lives.

Marguerite then died last fall. Same thing on *her* headstone.

Two of us who were young under Bob's tutelage have written the following on the privilege of our acquaintances with him. (Bob Evans thoughts will be published in the Oct. issue of *Smokejumper*) Our early dealings were brief, as we were college students devoting summers to the most satisfying and exciting work we could before being shackled to indoor employment. Those were the best summers of our lives, and Caldwell helped make them so.

*As recalled by Bob Gara*

In 1951 I was a rookie, and there, peering across the barracks, was Bob. I remember him as a huge, arrogant-seeming eminence. He kept everyone awake at night by typing a master's thesis, "Platonism in Shakespeare's Tragic Plays," on a tiny typewriter. We couldn't read it as he wrote because his big hands covered both machine and paper.

He was a sentimentalist with a real interest in friendship, mentoring and entertaining with his satirical and dry humor. I probably learned as much fire fighting and parachuting technology from him as I did about the finer points of Shakespeare's "*Julius Caesar*."

After training sessions, many of us gathered in The Forester's Bar where Bob held court drinking squatty bottles of Heidelberg Beer, holding them between his index and middle finger like a cigarette and tipping them to his lips. He also would bend bottle caps between those two fingers, then would see what we knew about interactions between theology, philosophy and English literature. My God, I enjoyed those discussions. How lucky I was to be only 19, an impressionable sponge.

I remember being awakened by being pressed from my bunk to the ceiling when Bob came in late. He would drop me while proclaiming, "Wake up, Garish. Don't sleep your evenings away when you know nothing about John Milton." He lifted weights, recounting how he'd been a 90-pound weakling who built himself up so he could join the army.

One time I jumped with Caldwell, Grant Gaeth (McCall '51), and another character, Paperlegs Peterson (McCall '47), to a small fire on the Payette National Forest.



*Bob Caldwell (McCall '46) above and with wife, Marguerite. (Photos courtesy Bob Gara and Bob Evans)*



Later we hiked out to an isolated mining town and walked into the bar. Being very thirsty (besides being only 19) I asked for a glass of milk. The bartender said, "I've been tending bar here for 10 years, no one has ever asked for milk, and I'll be damned if I'll serve such a thing now. Get out!" Caldwell demanded that his friend be given milk or else he would take drastic measures. A fight ensued, and the four of us were served milk.

During the summer of 1953 I was stationed with Bob at Idaho City. I remember soaking in the local hot springs and hearing him mumbling, "What does that guy know about *Paradise Lost*?" as someone nearby talked about Milton.

Twenty-two years later, I visited Bob when he was a professor in the Philosophy Department at the University of Arizona. He was chairing a meeting, and as I opened the meeting room door, he was at the head of a long table, unchanged, as sunlight streaming into the room glinted off those thick glasses. "Get out," he said, "Can't you see we're having a meeting?" I left, but half a second later the door swung open and my arm was almost broken in his iron grip as he bellowed, "Garish!" We had a fine get-together.

A year later he visited me in Seattle. I remember mentioning the time when, on a bet, he beat a U.S. Air Force rescue specialist at The Forester's Bar in a pushup contest. I probably exaggerated, but I said, "Do you remember having beaten that guy when you did 990 pushups?" Caldwell replied, "Was that all?" 🦡

*After smokejumping, Bob Gara served four years as an Air Force navigator. He then received his Ph.D. in forest entomology from Oregon State and has been a forest entomology professor at the University of Washington for 32 years.*

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*Dave Liston Dies in Accident, Parachute fails to open*

# Special Report from Alaska

by Murry Taylor—Alaska Smokejumpers

**O**n a practice jump Saturday, April 29, Dave Liston, a third year jumper was killed instantly when both his main and reserve parachutes failed to deploy. From what could be determined at the impact site, Dave had pulled all the correct ripcords, but to no avail.

Dave was one of those special jumpers, barrel-chested, red-bearded, wild and full of life, always grinning, teasing, wanting to wrestle and then bum a chew. Dave's nickname was Crusty. He went around in baggy Levis, wearing t-shirts with multiple tears and stretched necklines, and not the least concerned about it. He'd married Kristen just three weeks prior to his accident. Last year our crew enjoyed watching the two of them fall in love. On a practice jump last July, not far where he was ultimately to die, he proposed to her right after pulling off his gear. Kneeling in a bed of wildwood roses, they hugged and kissed and agreed to marry. After wintering in a snowbound cabin down toward Girdwood, they returned to Fairbanks two weeks ago to carry on with Dave's love of smokejumping. Kristen got herself a job in the Cookhouse. Then came April 29th. Dave woke up that morning and sang Happy Birthday to his beautiful, sleepy-eyed wife. Ten hours later he was gone.

We jumped three loads that afternoon. I'd jumped the second. It was my last (fourth) qualifying jump of a perfect week of refresher training. The crew had been in high spirits all week. The unit training was done under clear blue skies, we were back together after a winter apart, the promise of another great season as an Alaska Smokejumper was in the air. All that changed on the last stick of that last load.

Back at the Shack people wandered around, dazed, just walking, not saying much. The phone rang constantly. We held an emergency crew meeting at 8:00 pm. There was some silence, some talk, some crying. Four of the Bros had gone to Kristen and told her what had happened. Some had come back from the hospital, their hands still shaking, blood on their pants. We held a memorial service up on Birch Hill Wednesday afternoon. In a clearing, not far from where Dave had proposed, 500 hundred people gathered under cargo chutes. Kristen had wanted it that way. Friends had prepared a table of photos and memorabilia at the exact spot they'd agreed to marry. Just after 4:30 Jump 17 circled north, then flew a

straight line east over the Big Spot. Directly overhead, a single streamer was released. It fluttered to earth just thirty feet south of where we all stood. It was presented to Kristen. Everyone at the base had signed their names on it.

The ceremony celebrating Dave's life was the most beautiful and touching I've ever been to. As sunlight played through the colorful, undulating cargo chutes, songs were sung, prayers offered, Native American poems spoken, and wonderfully funny stories told. Afterward, we stood around and talked in small groups, hugged the family, and occasionally took a long look up into an empty sky. Later that evening we gathered out at Dave and Kristen's new land and partied until after midnight.

We've received a tremendous outpouring of support from jumpers all over the country. Jumpers that haven't jumped in years, and never knew Dave and Kristen, wanted to know where and how to contribute a donation. Others that lived in the family area around Bend, Oregon wanted to know what they could do the help the family. I'm continously amazed at how strong the smokejumper bond is. Hopefully, we can keep it that way.

As far as jumping goes, all BLM operations are on hold until further notice. An investigating team has been on task here since Tuesday. At this point we're refraining from speculating about the exact nature of the malfunction. We encourage others to do the same. The problem will most likely be revealed in time. A definitive understanding is maximized by avoiding rumors, theories, and bias based on partial evidence. I'll bring the NSA readership up to speed on the findings as soon as they are available. In the meantime, our work world has been turned upside down. Four rookies saw it happen. Now they've cancelled this years rookie class. We met with them last night on the lawn in front of the barracks and drank beer with them and expressed our regrets. They will have the option of being an Alaska Rookie next year if they wish. Some are being considered as rookie candidates this summer at a couple of the other jump bases.

Amid the losses of this past week, we all witnessed great courage, great strength. To be a part of it makes me very proud. 🧠



# My Brush with History: CPS Smokejumpers

By Gregg Phifer (Missoula '44)

**A**t the time of the last "good" war, World War II, 12,000 men refused induction into the military, were classified IV-E (conscientious Objectors), and assigned to Civilian Public Service for "work of national importance under civilian direction." Of that tiny minority (less than 1 percent of those drafted), nearly 40 percent were Mennonites, 11 percent Brethren, 7 percent Friends, 6 percent Methodists (my own denomination), and the rest represented more than 200 sects or denominations.

The Selective Service wanted us to be as nearly invisible as possible and sent us to distant locations. Most early CPS camps took over barracks constructed for the Civilian Conservation Corps, and we assumed responsibility for some projects they had abandoned with the onset of wartime conscription. Most CPS assignees worked for the Park Service, Soil Conservation Service or the Forest Service. Other alternatives, such as service in mental hospitals, came much later.

## *"How About Smokejumping?"*

In the fall of 1942 **Phil Stanley** (Missoula '43) a Quaker assigned to GPS 37 in Coleville, Wash., wrote Axel Lindh, head of fire control for Forest Service Region One: "It occurred to me that you might need men for your parachute fire-fighting corps." Lindh's reply told Stanley that, "So far as the Forest Service officials are concerned, we will be mighty glad to recruit parachute firefighting candidates from the Civilian Public Service Camps." He initiated a request to have smokejumping approved as a form of service for COs.

Both Selective Service and the National Service Board for Religious Objectors approved Lindh's request and in the spring of 1943, 300 men applied from CPS base camps. Three of those selected came from Buck Creek Camp (CPS 19 in Marion, N.C.) to which I had reported just before Christmas 1942.

The Forest Service selected 60 men who reported for jumper training at Camp Paxson on Seeley Lake, about 60 miles north of Missoula. Most, perhaps all had fought forest fires from their base camps. After jumper training, the Forest Service stationed units at strategic spots throughout the area: Seeley Lake, Big Prairie, and Nine Mile in Montana; Moose Creek and McCall in Idaho; and Redwood Ranger Station (Cave Junction) in southern Oregon. The agency established headquarters for CPS 103, the smokejumper unit administered by the Mennonite Central Committee, in Huson, Mont.



*Gregg Phifer 1945 and 1999. (Both photos courtesy Gregg Phifer)*

## *Program a Success*

The 1943 unit proved so successful that, by 1944, the Forest Service doubled its request. My part in a mountain rescue while assigned to the Mammoth Lakes side camp of CPS 37 earned me a strong letter of recommendation from the ranger of that district. For that and other reasons, (I had fought a number of fires both at Buck Creek and Coleville CPS camps), the Forest Service chose me as one of the 60 new men to receive jumper training in 1944 at the new Nine Mile base near Huson. Evidently the Forest Service was happy with our work since in 1945 the agency requested additional men to bring camp strength to better than 200. Some CPS men served all three years. I spent two years as a smokejumper, with 20 jumps, 10 training and refresher over the airfield at Nine Mile, and 10 fire jumps into the Idaho wilderness. 🌲

*By 1944 when Gregg joined the CPS/USFS smokejumpers, he had earned his BA from Pacific and his MA from Iowa. After release from CPS and two years teaching at Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio, he returned to Iowa for his doctorate. Gregg joined the faculty at Florida State University in 1949 and retired as Professor Emeritus in 1994. He is looking forward to seeing many of the CPS jumpers at William Penn College in July at the CPS reunion.*



# Sounding Off From the Editor



By **Chuck Sheley**  
(Cave Junction '59)  
MANAGING EDITOR

THE NSA VIDEO "Smokejumpers—Firefighters From The Sky" is complete and has already been viewed by many of you. Many copies arrived at my house Wednesday, March 22 at 4:30 p.m. By that time there were more than 300 orders on my desk waiting to be filled. I had the mailing envelopes already address, stamped with "Special Mail" logo, and the proper postage affixed. The phone and e-mail inquiries had been coming in daily so I knew everyone was anxious to get a copy.

By about 7 a.m. the next day all mailers had been stuffed, sealed and boxed to take to the post office. Since I stand in line daily to mail the merchandise orders, the guys behind the counter and I are on a first name basis. They had been alerted that I would be coming with a BIG mailing when the videos arrived. When told that I had 314 mailers

to go, Doug (USPS) closed his window and told me to drive around to the back. He came out with a large laundry type basket and we dumped the whole works into that basket. The video was officially in the mail by 8:10 a.m. on the 23rd!

When I got home, I was going to view the first 20 minutes of the production and then catch up on some sleep. After handling 314 of the videos, I was finally going to see the film. Well, once I started, the two hours went by quickly. The adrenaline rush that was coming from just watching was keeping me awake.

My impression: An outstanding production! How could a organization as small as the NSA do something of this quality? Of course, the answer is that producer Steve Smith is amazing. The same for Fred Rohrbach who had the vision to ramrod a project that previously did not get beyond the talking stage. The final "attaboys" go to those of you who donated to the production of the video. A large amount of the \$75,000 came in donations of \$50 from the membership. Sounds like we've just accepted an "Oscar". I'm still excited about this production. Steve Smith will be getting some award along the way for his superior work.

If the NSA were to shut down tomorrow (which we won't), the organization would have made its ultimate contribution to Smokejumping by

recording this history of a small group of men and women who have made the "big step" over our forest lands.

Reunion 2000 is now history. I have a feeling that it was a major success! 🍀

## New Board Members Elected

The following six individuals were elected to a three-year term in the recent NSA election:

*Larry Lufkin*  
*Leo Cromwell*  
*Mark Corbet*  
*Bill Eastman*  
*Fred Rohrbach*  
*Tom Kovalicky*

Our ballot count was the highest in NSA history. Thank you for taking the time to vote and participate in your organization

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# LETTERS

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## Video is Tremendous!

Editor:

I received the NSA video today. All I can say is "absolutely tremendous!" I was so engrossed that I took the phone off the hook and turned up the volume all the way. When I started thinking about applying for smokejumping in 1995, I did a good deal of research. Every year that I did not get accepted, I continued to do more and more research. Upon arriving at the base last spring, I thought that I had smokejumping history all mapped out. This video was one of the most informative I have viewed in a long time.

Please pass on kudos to all person involved with the production. It was excellent.

—Adam Lauber (Redding '99)

Editor:

Jack Rose [Missoula '49] and David's sister Nita Navon have made significant contributions to the fund the Helena Forest Foundation has set up to help with the new monument at David Navon's site in Mann Gulch. We here at the Helena Forest have designed a white Georgia marble stone which will bear an engraved Star of David at center top and the original embossed brass name plate bearing David's name, the same plate that was attached for decades to his concrete smokejumper-erected cross. The design has been approved by David's sister, and Jack Rose, David's contemporary. We have ordered the stone from a Missoula monument company and expect delivery any day. Plans are to employ the volunteer services of the local backcountry horsemen's group to pack the new monument, a couple bags of pre-mixed cement, a couple containers of water and some hand tools into the site. Meanwhile, a few local former smokejumpers and I will boat down the Missouri, hike to the Navon site, meet the packers, and install the new monument. Right now the plan is to carry this off on May 27, Memorial Day weekend. I plan on

taking some photos (35mm color) and I'd be glad to share them with you and the NSA newsletter

—David L. Turner

Forester

Helena Ranger District

*Editor's Note: In a letter to the editor in the April 2000 issue of this magazine, Jack Rose reported the lack of a monument for Navon, one of the jumpers killed in the Mann Gulch Fire of August 1949.*

## Involvement in Current Affairs Unnecessary

Editor:

The National Smokejumper Association programs and efforts; the publication, keeping track of old alumni, trail improvement projects, reunions and stories are of excellent value and strength to sustain and build our organization over time. Initiatives to draw in current jumpers through political involvement in current affairs are unnecessary and, in fact, harmful. Youthful, hotheaded rantings are generally due to a lack of information and are regretted in time. An organization comprised mostly of older and/or retired smokejumpers should know this and maintain considerable political reserve.

I appreciate the National Smokejumper Association and particularly those of you who have rolled up your sleeves to make it work. Keep up the good job.

—Robert Quillin (Fairbanks '71)

## Appreciates Nemore Article

Editor:

I was tickled pink to read Murry Taylor's article about Steve [*Nemore in the Oct. 1999 issue of Smokejumper. Editor*]. This saga needed to be told whether "management" can or would not reply. If we wait for their comments I'll be retired and probably won't care while sitting in my rocking chair in Quartzite, Ariz.

That kind of article "spans the gap." Controversial? Maybe. Made some people mad? Probably. I have been mad for the last 4-1/2 years, but "management" hasn't worried about me.

---

## READERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO GET INVOLVED.

Send your letter to the editor:

U.S. Mail: Chuck Sheley, 10 Judy Ln. Chico, CA 95926

E-Mail: [cnkgshley@earthlink.net](mailto:cnkgshley@earthlink.net)

send as e-mail, not an attached document

Deadline for the October issue is August 1st

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Let it all hang out once in a while. It'll most likely do more good than harm. That festering boil over management's "problem" with Steve needs to be lanced. Maybe Murry's article will help get off the pot on this.

As Al Dunton always said, "Keep the Faith."

—Mike Silva (Redding '72)

### What's My Line?

Editor:

Years ago I was a guest on "What's My Line" as an Episcopal priest for the McCall smokejumpers. Afterwards we had a party with the panel, including Carol Channing of "Hello Dolly" fame. I told her about Tom Decker, a Lutheran seminarian, who parachuted into a nudist camp not far from Idaho City. She called him and he became a contestant on "I've Got a Secret" as a shy minister who parachuted into a nudist camp. Tom had hung up in a tree and the natives gathered under him asking how they could help.

Best to you and all for the best issue yet!

—Stan Tate (McCall '53)

*Editor's note: Tom Decker (Idaho City '64) is now a U.S. Army colonel, post chaplain at Ft. Huachuca, Ariz. His column is a regular feature in this magazine.*

*Neil Satterwhite, who trained at McCall and also jumped from Boise, wrote the following letter to the official leading a Forest Service study of aerial delivered firefighter operations.*

Dear Mr. Greenhoe:

I was employed with the Forest Service for 15 seasons, three of those on a helitak crew, 10 as a smokejumper in Idaho, and two years as a Young Adult Conservation Corps program director in Nevada. I can say with confidence and appreciation that, had it not been for the Forest Service and firefighting I would have never graduated from college or rehabilitated myself following wounds suffered in Vietnam.

I am opposed to the concept of centralizing aerial delivery of firefighters, especially as it pertains to traditional smokejumping efforts. The U.S. Forest Service has one of the most cost effective units with a proven safety record in its very successful fire fighting arsenal, and that would be the smokejumping concept of initial attack on wildfires in the Western U.S. and Alaska. I had the privilege of fighting fire in every

Western state and Alaska, and you do not want to dismantle the remaining regional smokejumper organizations. There are many commonalities in fire behavior, but to intentionally eliminate the knowledge and expertise held by local personnel at each regional smokejumper base is tantamount to inviting another "Storm King" catastrophe, similar, in my opinion, to the incident in Colorado during the 1994 fire season. An example would be taking firefighters from the "Lower 48" states and dropping them into an active fire in the interior of Alaska without an experienced Alaska firefighter among the crew. Local knowledge of terrain and territory are critical, as I have found to be true in both firefighting and military operations.

If the existing wilderness and designated remote roadless areas and their recent continued expansion in the continental United States are any indication, there will continue to be a need for rapid deployment of highly trained firefighters such as the smokejumpers well into the new millennium. Helicopters and their trained personnel are very capable firefighters, in most cases. Yet, if the bottom line for the U.S. Forest Service is to economize and/or reduce costs as it relates to the wildfire fighting efforts, the reduction of multiple local helicopter contracts and their related personnel within individual districts and selected forests around the West is a more practical and cost effective approach of meeting your objective.

In my experience, smokejumpers have never been utilized to their potential. District fire managers either do not understand their capabilities or they have been directed by "territorial" mandates to use only local resources. This, despite the fact that the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have invested thousands of dollars into the training and professional development of smokejumpers to become the elite fire fighting force for which they are recognized. Common sense would dictate an enhanced educational program within the district fire management system stressing the capabilities of; the availability of; requesting and effectively using smokejumpers either as initial attack or as "incident command" overhead personnel.

Good luck in the decision making process and implementation of any possible changes coming from this ADFP study. It is my hope that the decision does not include crippling the smokejumper concept of operation through the approval of a centralization concept.

—Neil E. Satterwhite (McCall '65)

# Smokejumper Networking

Jim Veitch (Alaska Smokejumpers)

There is a mathematical theory called “the six degrees of difference” which says every American is six people away from the President of the United States. I know someone, who knows someone, etc., who knows the President personally. All Americans belong to a weak network of acquaintances that bonds us.

Smokejumpers, both active and veteran, share a much stronger bond and network. We belong to a group of unique individuals who have gone through a common adventure. The smokejumper experience has shaped us in many different ways, but we will all remain smokejumpers until the day we die. It is almost impossible to generalize about smokejumpers, but it seems safe to say smokejumpers are self-reliant individualists. Because we each have a strong streak of self-reliance, we tend to go our own ways.

I have a vivid fire memory where a regimented hotshot crew watched in disgust as a milling mob of jumpers ambled off in seeming-disorganization. “Filtering through the woods” was once the term for it at Missoula.

Yet, when it came to the crunch, jumpers ended up at

the right spot and pulled together, almost as if there was a sixth sense or network tying the jump crew together on a fire. That network made the jump crew a powerful force on fire—each jumper thinking as an individual but knowing when to lend a hand to help a jump partner or the crew.

Once jumpers leave smokejumping for the “real world,” they “filter off through the woods” of life. Some keep in touch with a small number of old jump partners or members of their rookie classes, but as the years go by, ties weaken as new life challenges are encountered. We are self-reliant individualists, but stop and ask yourself why we always jumped with a partner, why we worked so powerfully as a crew.

Smokejumpers “in the real world” fail to benefit from their special bond. Smokejumpers don’t network well. Networking is a concept popular in business and government. Networking is about keeping lines of communication open, then asking for and giving help when it is needed. It’s like that magic ingredient that made a jumper crew work together.



Washington, D.C. June 1949—Bill Hellman being interviewed over the Mutual Broadcasting System. (L-R) Bill Dratz, Skip Stratton and Ed Egan. (Photo courtesy Skip Stratton)

## Conflict/Mediation/Team Building

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Smokejumpers don't network well in the real world because they are so damned independent and self-reliant. They want to carry their own load, but networking has nothing to do with failing to carrying your part of the load. It has everything to do with sharing with those you know and respect. It's like showing up at the right spot on the fire line when needed. As individuals and as a group, smokejumpers need to start networking more.

Here's a simple example of how networking works. Say I need to hire a new employee. I get three top applicants who all rate about the same. I notice one applicant, Alan, used to work at the same company as Bob, with whom I play golf. I call Bob, who puts me in contact his friend Carey, who worked on several projects with Alan. Carey gives me a review of Alan's performance. Based on that information I hire Alan. I've just networked, and that is how much of business and government works in the real world.

Here's what happened: I needed information and access. Bob put a tiny bit of his credibility on the line by giving access to Carey. On Bob's behalf, Carey gave me useful information. But networking is a two-way street. In the future Carey will feel more open to asking Bob for help, and Bob will feel more open to approaching me. It's all based on trust, not obligation. The cynical view would be that we are all using each other for selfish purposes. That can happen but doesn't have to. Instead, the process should be seen as a willingness to share information and access for the benefit of those we know and respect.

All across America there are casual, informal networks that strengthen people with common interests or shared experiences. Most of the groups have more-tenuous affiliation than smokejumpers. Networks are informal relationships based on a modicum of share trust. Veteran smokejumpers have gone on to accomplish some amazing things, contributing to American society at all levels. The framework for assisting fellow smokejumpers is out there.

Networking is all about communication, staying in

touch, and to establish a network you need to get in touch and stay in touch. The first step is to re-open lines of communication with old smokejumper friends. Just let them know you're still kicking and what you are doing. A good way to do that is through active participation in the National Smokejumper Association.

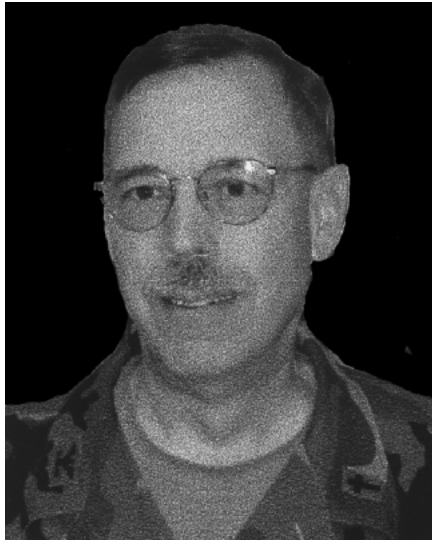
If you've already joined, take the time to phone or write an old jump partner. You may renew an old friendship and you will undoubtedly find some interesting stories. Another step would be to give an old jump partner a one-year membership to the NSA ... a pretty inexpensive present that will put one more jumper back on the jump list. If he or she already has a membership, pay it up for another year or send an NSA gift. A vital function of the NSA is to foster contact between smokejumpers, to re-open communication. Take advantage of it to renew your contacts with old friends.

The next step is to actually network. If you need advice or access call a smokejumper. Remember the "six degrees of difference." Through the smokejumper network, you're only a few phone calls away from accessing almost any information you might need. Likewise, you are capable of lending a hand to another smokejumper. It's not like asking for money or an unfair advantage, just information or access. As a self-reliant individualist you still have to dig your own fire line. If you are called, give advice, point directions, or give an introduction.

Exhilaration is to hang under a parachute on a fire jump high over a rocky ridge. The smokejumper is alone, reliant only on skill and luck. There is no one there to help, and that makes it all the better. Once on the ground, cooperation is needed to fight the fire. That's when the other great part of smokejumping occurs, the teamwork and sharing. By using the smokejumper network you are still part of the team. 🧯

*Jim Veitch is a regular contributor to Smokejumper and is currently jumping in Alaska.*

# Checking The Canopy



By **Tom Decker**  
(Idaho City '64)  
CH (COL), USA  
INSTALLATION STAFF CHAPLAIN

OKAY, SCOUT, SUICIDES are troublesome. Probably they are so intended as anger finally pulls out all the stops to snub life and its disappointing participants.

Pain and guilt become the unwanted leftovers as survivors necessarily ask, "What else could I have done? What should I have seen?" Ah, troubling questions for poor survivors!

A colleague—an NCO—recently took his own life unexpectedly at another installation. It literally caught everyone by surprise because he was a very good soldier. He was a man of faith; chaplains relied on his guitar, his voice, and his original songs to liven up a prayer breakfast or a chapel event. He loved the Army and wanted to do all the military-pride Hooah stuff.

Christian baptism says that the only way to preserve life is to place it day by day in the hands of Him who creates life. More than sitting in chapel on a Sunday morning, it's giving to God the failures as well as the successes

## Resurrection hope in times of suicide, too

of life. It is acknowledging that, in spite of all the control measures that we build into life for the pursuit of happiness, we cannot be God to guarantee outcomes. Martin Luther said that living with one's baptism means that we daily drown the old man, an ironic admission that God works in the discrepancies of life where we think He cannot possibly be.

Christians remember the words of Jesus, who said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life" even in times of a suicide.

These are the profound words—simple, really—which say that what we have lost, God gives back in full even beyond our very limited and very worldly expectations.

The words—"I am the Resurrection and the Life"—bridge gaps between what is only an ideal and what is real in our lives, the very discrepancy that causes people to begin to think about taking their own lives.

It does no good to hold the military responsible or assign blame to the experiences of formative years. Likewise, parents cannot chastise themselves for their own failures to be what they could or should have been.

Jesus' words are only words, but they temper the successes and failures—of military careers, parental inconsistencies, and relationships gone wrong—with God's holy forgiveness. When these words connect with faith, they have the power to transform lives from no worldly meaning to life that has meaning both sacred and eternal

"Remember, everyone you meet is carrying a burden."—Philo of Alexandria 🕊

*Tom is currently post chaplain at Ft. Huachuca, Ariz.*

### MANN GULCH MEMORIAL

This bronze memorial to the memory of the 13 smokejumpers who died in Mann Gulch was paid for, in part, by a \$1,000 donation by the NSA. Ray Beasley (McCall '52) donated the 1949-era jump jacket. The monument is at a public dock on the Missouri River near Mann Gulch. 🕊



# REVIEW: SMOKEJUMPERS - FIREFIGHTERS FROM THE SKY

By Wendy Nichols

Smokejumpers - Firefighters from the Sky, is a chronicle of smokejumping from its birth to its present day. Not only does it serve as an invaluable historical record of smokejumping, it is informative, insightful and compelling.

Producer Stevan M. Smith, a 25-year television news and documentary producer has masterfully produced a thorough historical record, as well as an entertaining program. From the beginning, the viewer discovers that the history of smokejumping is not one story, but the compilation of many individual stories: stories of tragedy and victory, of bravery and sacrifice, of courage and strength.

Through the video, we discover how the history of smokejumping intertwines with the history of the nation. The influences of wars, technology, eco-

nomic scarcity and civil rights movements are integral to the history of the smokejumper.

The program also serves as a memorial to those who lost their lives in the line of duty. As the stories of each man's death unfold, their memories are honored. The tribute also emphasizes the vital lessons learned by each tragic end.

Not only is the content exemplary, its production qualities are top notch too. Smith uses a variety of personal interviews, historical footage, still photography and insightful narration to tell the smokejumpers' story. The technical elements of audio, lighting, shot composition and editing are excellent.

This is a program ready for prime time public television. However, it does run a bit long. By dividing the 2 hour program into a two-part series, it would be easier on the viewer without compro-

mising the content.

*Smokejumpers - Firefighters from the Sky* is a must see for anyone considering vying for a position in the coveted ranks of an airborne fire-suppression unit. Watching it would give new recruits the opportunity to understand the rich heritage they are carrying on and it would enable them to learn from the mistakes and victories of those who came before them. It also serves as a vital chronicle of history for the nation and offers a chance to learn about, and take pride in, a group of dedicated professionals that few would have the privilege to know about otherwise. 🍷

*Wendy Nichols is the Research Editor for Videomaker magazine, a monthly magazine that deals with the tools, technology and techniques of video production.*

## Video Donors

The NSA thanks the following additional donors since the April issue:

Douglas L. Bernhard	\$100.00
Wesley A. Brown	50.00
George W. Cross	50.00
Phillip D. Davis	100.00
Jimmie F. Dollard	50.00
William E. Frame	50.00
William A. Groman	50.00
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Todd Johnson	50.00
Robert F. Kruckeberg	50.00
Harold J. Maxwell	10.00 (to make up \$50)
Harold (Harry) L. Roberts	50.00
Fred G. Rohrback	295.86
Joe N. Rumble	50.00
Robert C. Searles	60.00
Neil E. Satterwhite	25.00
Deanne R. Shulman	50.00
Jack M. Wilcox	50.00

This is an ongoing project and every donation is a tremendous help. Send yours to the NSA office in Missoula.

## VIEWERS COMMENT ON NSA VIDEO

"*Smokejumpers: Firefighters from the Sky* arrived today and I just finished viewing it. It is a truly great video—should win some sort of an award. The footage and the editing is marvelous. It was such an impressive and professional piece of work that I just had to tell someone."

—Bill Eastman (North Cascades '54)

"Just finished watching the video. Naturally Roundhouse Ralph couldn't sit still without critiquing it. It is a *splendid* piece of work. I was greatly impressed."

—Dave Slagle (Cave Junction '59)

"I have screened the video and share the enthusiasm for the great job Steve Smith has done on it. The video will be an important item in preserving the history of smokejumping. I especially enjoyed seeing all the familiar faces from my time at Ninemile."

—Walter "Pic" Littell (Missoula '44)

"The video is a great piece of work. I took the cover photo of Mick Swift on the Okanogan National Forest in 1963. A gust of wind swept him into the tree. It was about the only smokejumper mistake I ever saw Mick make."

—Jerry Schmidt (Cave Junction '62)



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# SMOKEJUMPERS IN PRINT

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**W**hat do smokejumpers, the CIA, and the People's Republic of China have in common? Plenty, and you can find out exactly how much in Frank Holober's book *Raiders of the China Coast* (Hardback, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Md.)

The book is a fascinating account of how the CIA systematically infiltrated sensitive areas controlled by the government of Red China. Smokejumpers had an intrinsic role in helping to guarantee the success of the missions. **Gar Thorsrud** (Missoula '46), for example, played a crucial part:

Gar was one of the smoke-jumper contingent, along with **Herman Ball** (Missoula '50), **Lyle**

**Grenager** (Missoula '48), **Jack Mathews** (Missoula '48), **Wally Dobbins** (Missoula '47) and **Les Grenlin** (Missoula '46), all of whom had worked, or at least been trained, as smokejumpers in Montana. They had been recruited to help with the paratroop landing and act as kickers on overflights. Gar was a true Viking, full of energy and good spirits and more than willing to meet a dangerous assignment half-way. In looks he was closer to Hagar the Horrible than Kirk Douglas, but his infectious personality and adventurous spirit, coupled with a confident ambition, were enough to couple him for life with Audrey, the prettiest young woman ever to come out of Montana

and the surrounding states. (He later became a pilot and the owner of a charter air service.)

The author said: "I was also impressed with the (CIA)'s ability to go beyond its own organizational borders and recruit staff from other governmental agencies, in this case chiefly the military, and from other groups whose members were compatible with the objectives of the operation, such as the smokejumpers."

For information on ordering, contact a bookstore near you or contact the Naval Institute Press by visiting its website at [www.usni.org](http://www.usni.org) or by calling (800) 233-8764. 📖

*Information for this article passed along by Fred Donner (Missoula '59)*

## Items from the Fire Pack

### A CRASH BEFORE BREAKFAST

IN 1950, **JIM CAMPBELL** (North Cascades '48), a fellow jump partner from the Hat Point Lookout Fire, decided to buy a private aircraft and invited me to take a trial flight at dawn before we started work at 7:30. We reached 15,000 feet altitude over Upper Lake Chelan, a rugged area of primitive wilderness.

Suddenly, the single-engine prop stopped rotating and Jim attempted a few shallow dives to restart the engine. Nothing worked as Jim realized he failed to turn on the carburetor heat, so we had to make a forced landing somewhere below. We spotted a small mountain meadow and headed for it; Jim was planning to make a dead-stick landing on the wheels.

The powerless plane was nose-heavy and threatened to dive, so Jim made a turn to the right. I had cinched

my belt and braced my feet against the instrument panel when I saw the ground approaching quickly. Jim managed to get the plane righted as we side-slipped into the ground. Fortunately for us, the small meadow was saturated with spring runoff water and we skidded along, digging a shallow furrow for about 100 feet before coming to rest on a pile of rocks.

During the impact, Jim had smashed his face against the instrument panel and cut his eye, and had a cut on his neck that bled profusely. I made a compress out of a piece of his shirt and stemmed the blood flow. He had a slight case of shock, though, and was pale; we hiked out to eventual safety.

After some years past smokejumping days, I learned that Jim had moved to Oklahoma and had died in an airplane crash along with his wife and children.

—**Hal Werner**  
(North Cascades '48)

### PEELING POTATOES AFTER A BAD CONNECTION

**AD CARLSEN'S** (MISSOULA '43) forgetfulness earned him KP duty, but it wasn't a laughing matter at the time of the 1944 crew's final training jump. Carlsen, it turned out, had failed to snap his static line onto the plane, and fell below the timberline before his emergency chute opened.

He later said he wouldn't have pulled the emergency chute had he known about the KP. Some irritated squad leaders (Forest Service personnel) said Carlsen might need to be "wet nursed."

—**Maynard W. Shetler**  
(Missoula '44)

# Touching All Bases

## Boise

Grant Beebe (NIFC '90)

This fire season began incredibly early for the Boise BLM Smokejumpers, when a pair of jumpers, in Roswell, New Mexico, to do some prescribed fire planning work, were dispatched to a wildfire. Since then, a series of jumper crews have headed to the Southwest to help out with what has been shaping up to be a serious fire situation. So, barely two months passed between our last fire dispatch in 1999 and the first of 2000.

Several jumpers have decided not to return this year, giving us our largest rookie class for years, seven, plus two transfers from Forest Service bases. Phil Brollier will not jump this season, so he can concentrate on his insurance business, and Ted Mason (Boise '89) has a new training job at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). Joel Gosswiller (Boise '97) is returning to eastern Idaho to work for the BLM there, and Bill Birmingham (Boise '97) has left to teach. Neil Persons (Boise '90) will concentrate on training for the Olympic telemark team, and stop risking his valuable legs on fire jumps.

The rookies flew to Alaska on April 25 to begin their four-week training. Those who complete the training will stay up north for the Alaska season, then all the Boise and Alaska rookies will come to the Great Basin in July for some Lower-48 experience.

A number of squadleaders became spotters over the winter: Dave Estey, Hector Madrid, Emil Magallanes, Kasey Rose, and Eric Walker. Finally, we should be able to field enough spotters to staff our ships with having to borrow spotters from other bases.

Ben Hinkle has returned to Boise from Redding to work in the National Office and fly our Otter on his off time, spelling Kevin Stalder, who will return as our chief pilot. We will again sport an all-Otter fleet, one owned by the BLM and two under contract.

## Grangeville

By Jerry Zumalt (Redding '70)

News From GACLAND: It's been a pretty good start to the season already. We sent 12 to Mississippi this winter on various lengths of assignments to help

Region 8 with their prescribed burning commitments. Although the weather wasn't too cooperative (it was fairly dry there), they still managed to burn more than 18,000 acres and go on a few wildfire assignments.

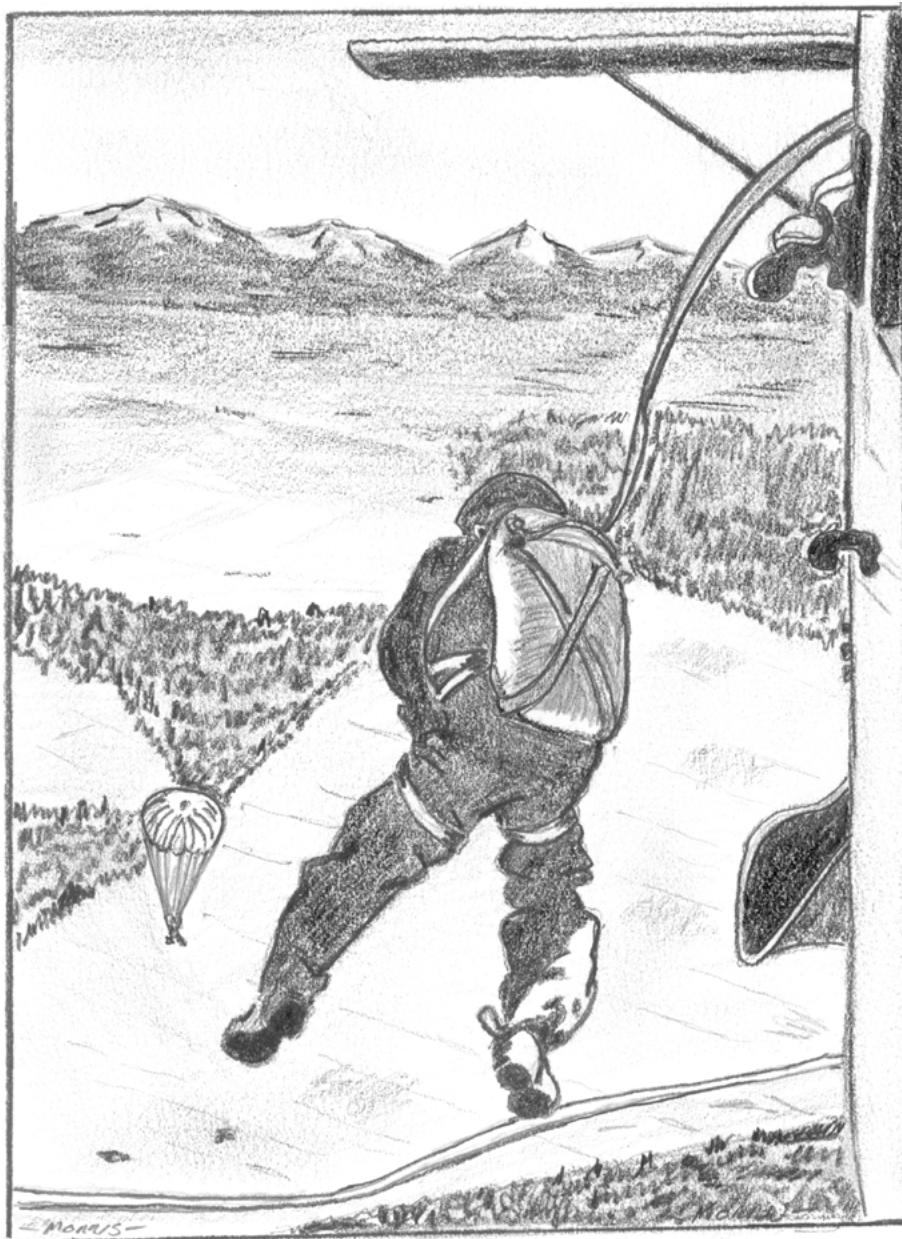
Tree climbing in the windy city of Chicago is in full swing. Brian Kopka is coordinating and supervising FS climbers in search of the Asian Longhorned—excuse me, Longhorned—beetle. He showed up in ChiTown in January and was soon followed by eight other GAC jumpers. This project is expected to last into 2005, and dovetails nicely with the fire season here.

Tim Tevebaugh detailed to the Superior NF in mid-February and is expected to stay there through most of the season. He put a presentation together about the Independence Day Blowdown and the fire potential in the Boundary Waters. Tim, currently, is working on burn plans and will be heading up some of the cleanup work this spring and summer.

Willie Kelly recently toured with four Russian Foresters from Siberia. The focus of the trip was forestry and fire-use practices in the U.S., and how they may apply in Russia. The group covered a lot of Montana in two weeks—starting in Seeley Lake and ending in West Yellowstone. They worked with the Dept. of Natural Resources and the Gallatin NF and participated in several prescribed burns. They also had the opportunity to make a presentation to the Society of American Foresters, Missoula chapter. Besides being tour guide, Willie caught up on his vodka intake and learned a few more Russian swear words.

At present (May), Marge Kuehn-Tabor is on a six-week burning assignment in South Carolina, Kevin Thompson is committed to RX on the Kootenai, and then the IPNF, and Josh Tolbert is on a helicopter IA detail to Florida. We have seven climbers in Chicago, three folks working in Missoula and the rest of us are packing chutes, sewing and getting a little burning in on the Nez.

Grangeville filled two temporary squad-leader positions for the summer. Brett Rogers and Willie Kelly will soon be terrifying the skyways over a forest near you. Seriously, we look forward to having a new excuse for missing the spot. We should be at 30 jumpers for the season, and have two rookies this year. Gabe Holguin and Andy Lane are both Forestry



*Jump'n' the Tri-Motor (Illustration by Ken Morris [Associate])*

students at the University of Idaho in Moscow. Gabe is from R-3 and Andy has been working on the Clearwater Forest. Sixteen finished refresher training April 12.

The ERA Twin Otter contract was reassigned to Redding, Calif. recently, and Grangeville will be using one of the McCall Twin Otters with Forest Service pilots this year. We'll miss pilots like Capt. Bob Nicol and Randy Leypoldt, but Marc Anderson and Dan Jarvis should fit right in here on the prairie.

The last bit of news is that plans are finally on the board for an addition to the Grangeville Base facilities. This will provide us with a little more storage and working space. Boosters might finally be able to locate their travel bags before heading to the Triangle, too.

Construction won't start until we can figure out where to put the Great Basin flag and a secure home is found for Kevin Costner (Sometime this fall, we hope).

## McCall

Mark Koontz (McCall '92)

**"Livin' the Dream" MYL 2000**

As we get ready to start the first jump season of 2000, I want to recognize the long careers of two McCall jumpers, Jerry Ogawa and Leo Cromwell. Jerry started his jump career in McCall in 1967 where he jumped until 1974, at which time he took a squad leader position in Boise. When the Boise base shut down in 1979, Jerry returned to McCall, where he has been jumping ever since. Jerry has 388 jumps and 177 fire jumps and is returning for his 34th season.

What is most remarkable about Jerry's career is that he has had at least one fire jump every season since 1967. Leo began his jump career in Idaho City in 1966, transferred to Fairbanks in 1968 for one season before returning to Idaho. He spent five years working with the BLM para-cargo operations on the BIFC Ramp in Boise before returning to active jump status in 1974.

He jumped out of Boise through 1979, when he became a McCall smokejumper. Leo has 357 jumps and 169 fire jumps and is returning for his 30th season. Through his efforts with the NSA, Leo has and continues to preserve the history of smokejumping. Both Jerry and Leo are teachers in the off-season which has kept their jump seasons rather short, but no less-remarkable.

With that said, the McCall base will be operating this season with 70 jumpers. This includes eight "Neds": Laura Bianca, Forrest Behm, Joel Butcher, Eric Eastep, Ryan Garber, Edward Grinsell, Andreas Luderer and Richard Turner. McCall will also be filling a GS-9 operations foreman position, two GS-7's 13/13 squad leaders, and two GS-7 temporary squad leader positions. Stay tuned.

McCall jumpers, Dan Felt (MYL '77), Capt. Jack

Seagraves (MYL '63) and John Carothers (MYL '88) have sadly moved on. Dan retired in December to spend his winters skiing and summers, in a place that remains to be determined. Dan finished his career with 314 jumps, 23 of those in Russia. Dan served as the base operations foreman for 14 years and was an integral part of the Russian Smokejumper Exchange Program, having made three trips to Russia.

Jack has also decided it was time to trade the Whites in, not for a fishing pole, but a computer. Jack jumped out of McCall from 1963 through 1965 before taking a short break to pursue a career as a dentist. He returned to McCall in 1988 after 23 years (that has to be a record for a retread) with some very interesting tales to tell. For his next endeavor, Capt. Jack has decided to jump into the world of on-line trading. John is the new AFMO of the Pacific Region for the BIA in Sacramento, Calif. John finishes his career with 180 jumps and 74 fire jumps. The bro's wish them the best!

Just in time for the Cubs home opener, five McCall jumpers arrived in Chicago. Mike Feliciano, Kelvin Palm, Jeff McPhetridge, Jarod Sayer and Todd Franzen left for Chicago on March 13th to climb trees as part of the Asian Longhorn Beetle eradication program. Dan Pierson, Jeff Schriker, Lance Drake and Rod Kilner joined the hunt on April 15. They are scheduled to return to McCall May 30 for the first refresher.

The New Mexico detail refreshed in Missoula the week of April 3 and hopefully, by the time this goes to print, will be jumping fires in Region 3. The "neds" will begin their training on June 5 and the late refresher is scheduled to start on June 12. The McCall jumpships for the season will be 142Z (turbo DC-3), 141Z and 142Z (Twin Otters).

Let the games begin!!

### **Missoula** **Scott Belknap (McCall '83)**

The year started out on the right foot for the Missoula Jump Base. The findings of the Aerial Delivered Firefighter Platform Study confirmed once again that jumpers are fiscally a good choice. Clear-thinking Region 1 managers seized that opportunity to increase our ranks by 20 jumpers. Bigger is better and MSO will weight in at 80 strong this year. That means a larger-than-life rookie class. With a total of 31 rookies at opening day, the trainers will have their hands full.

Over the winter, Missoula again took the lead coordinating the R-8, Mississippi Prescribed Burning Detail. A total of 39 R-1 personnel participated with

22 slots filled by jumpers. In a very dry dormant season burn window, 30,000 acres of prescribed burning was accomplished. A statewide ban on open burning signed by the Governor of Mississippi curtailed burning but opened the door for wildfires.

Missoula and Redding are coordinating the USDA APHIS Asian Longhorn Beetle tree-climbing projects in Chicago and New York City. This pesky beetle emerged from packing crates sent from the Orient and has now spread to American hardwood trees. Jumpers are using "arbor-style" tree climbing with ropes, looking for evidence of infestation. Infected trees are then removed and destroyed.

Silver City is looking like the place to be early in the season. A very dry winter, complete with retardant ships on contract and fires, set the stage. Wayne Williams will lead the crew compiled with representatives from all FS bases.

Finally, a Helena High School X-Cel classroom project has affectionately touched the Smokejumper World. An assignment to read "Young Men and Fire" grew to include a collection of oral histories, production of a multimedia show of remembrances, a designation for Mann Gulch on the National Historic Register, and culminated with the burial of a time capsule of letters, obituaries and personal belongings at the National Wildland Firefighters Memorial in Missoula. The Missoula Smokejumper Welfare Fund contributed funds for this project.

### **North Cascades** **Larry Lufkin (Cave Junction '63)**

John Button reported that Doug Houston, Base Manager, was detailed to Alaska for several days to assist in presenting classes to Alaska fire fighters. John also reported that NCSB jumpers are scheduled to start prescribed burning on the Okanogan NF May 7.

Two jumpers, Kathleen Russell and Michael Noe, have completed their refresher training and are scheduled to go to Region 3 (Silver City) as soon as the request comes in. Refresher training for other veterans will also commence soon. John Button and the others are preparing for the start of the jump season by getting back into shape. Jumpers Matt Woolsley, Frank Clements, Scott Wicklund and Jean Knapp are in Chicago climbing trees again this spring helping to remove diseased trees from city streets. John said that NCSB will have six rookies this year.

As usual, the rookies will spend three weeks in Redmond doing ground training and their first five practice jumps, then will go to Winthrop for a week to complete the remaining 10 practice jumps.

## Redding

Josh Mathiesen (Redding '94)

As the final days of the 1999 season were coming to a close, Redding jumpers were already making preparations for the year 2000. With the 60-year Smokejumper reunion being held here, new rookies to train, and lots of catch up from last year's busy fire season, there was plenty of work to keep the winter crew busy.

Twelve jumpers returned to work on March 7th and headed east for tree climbing duty.

These jumpers spent their days climbing the elms, maples and other assorted hardwoods of New York City in search of the devastating Asian longhorned beetle. As you know from earlier reports, this beetle is threatening to destroy the hardwoods on the east coast.

The first refresher was held April 3. Twenty-five jumpers completed the two weeks of annual training and subsequently were placed on the list. This enabled us to be ready for any early season requests, but the lack of airplanes has left us only able to respond in the pounder mode. Redding will be home to 40 jumpers again this year with 10 of these folks being rookies.

On April 23 our 10 rookies showed up to begin the seven weeks of intensive Smokejumper training. This year's group looks like a worthy bunch and will be prepared to carry on the fine tradition of Smokejumping that has developed over the years. All indicators are pointing towards another busy fire year, but we all know how that goes. We experienced average amounts of precipitation this winter, but have had a relatively dry and warm spring. Whatever the season brings, we will definitely be ready.

As everyone should know by now, Redding has hosted "Reunion 2000," commemorating 60 years of Smokejumping. A lot of time and effort went into making this reunion the best-ever, and we are proud to have hosted such an event.

## Redmond Report

Mark Corbet (La Grande '74)

Smokejumpers at the Redmond Air Center have been busy over the winter and it will not slow down anytime soon. Ron Rucker, Mark Gibbons, Mark Corbet, and Earl Palmer, Jr. traveled to New York to track down the dreaded Asian longhorned beetle. Actually, they will be climbing trees to assist in the eradication of that beetle.

Also, Bill Selby, Tony Loughton and Cynthia Lusk traveled to South Carolina to assist in burning prescribed fire units. RAC will again host a rough-terrain parachute school for the 1st Special Forces Group

based at Fort Lewis, Washington. Base management completed lots of refresher training and this year will select jumpers for Silver City, N.M. directly from the jump list. Region 6 will train 16 jumpers at Redmond and Winthrop. Ten of the 16 will be assigned to RAC. Finally, Base Manager Dewey Warner has a squad-leader position to fill and will be selecting a jumper for that position before summer.

## West Yellowstone

Ashley Sites (West Yellowstone '98)

Fifteen Forest Service smokejumpers, as well as one from the Park Service and one from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This includes four rookies.

The new guys are Chip Gerdin and Leslie Williams, both from Bridger-Teton helitack, and Neal Maben from the Hebgen Lake district of the Gallatin. In addition to these full-time Westies, there should be about six BLM detailers around the base. Greg Anderson still manages the base with Jon Ueland, Bill "Bright Eyes" Craig, Charlie Wetzel and Bill Werhane rounding out the overhead.

We will have the ERA Twin Otter back for our jump ship and Tanker 25, a P-3 Orion, on the pad at the tanker base. Romie Carpenter should be piloting the Otter and Bill Waldman and Wendy Gima in the Orion. It may be a busy year on the retardant side if the Fire-trol problem is not worked out. Jiggs Parker will continue to hold down this side of things as he has forever (it seems).

It's been a pretty dry spring after a marginal winter and we look forward to some activity if the June rains don't materialize. At least one jumper will go to Silver City and hopefully some guys will end up in Chicago or New York climbing trees. We have some new office space added to the loft and hope to use it to host training. 🐼

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## VIDEO COMMENTS (continued from page 14)

Steve Smith has put together a real, dramatic history not tarted up fact-fiction bullshit. The visual effects during Eric Hipke's run for his life(South Canyon) are stunning and from what I know about it, stunningly close to what it must have been like. I agree with Steve, that those fires(Mann Gulch and South Canyon) are the soul of smokejumping. They are like Bach's music in that you can rehearse and rehash them a thousand times and they still retain authentic emotion—is the case of Mann Gulch and South Canyon, pity and fear.

—John Maclean (Associate)

Author of *Fire on the Mountain*

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# ODDS & ENDS

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## Missoula Jumper Severely Injured in February Accident

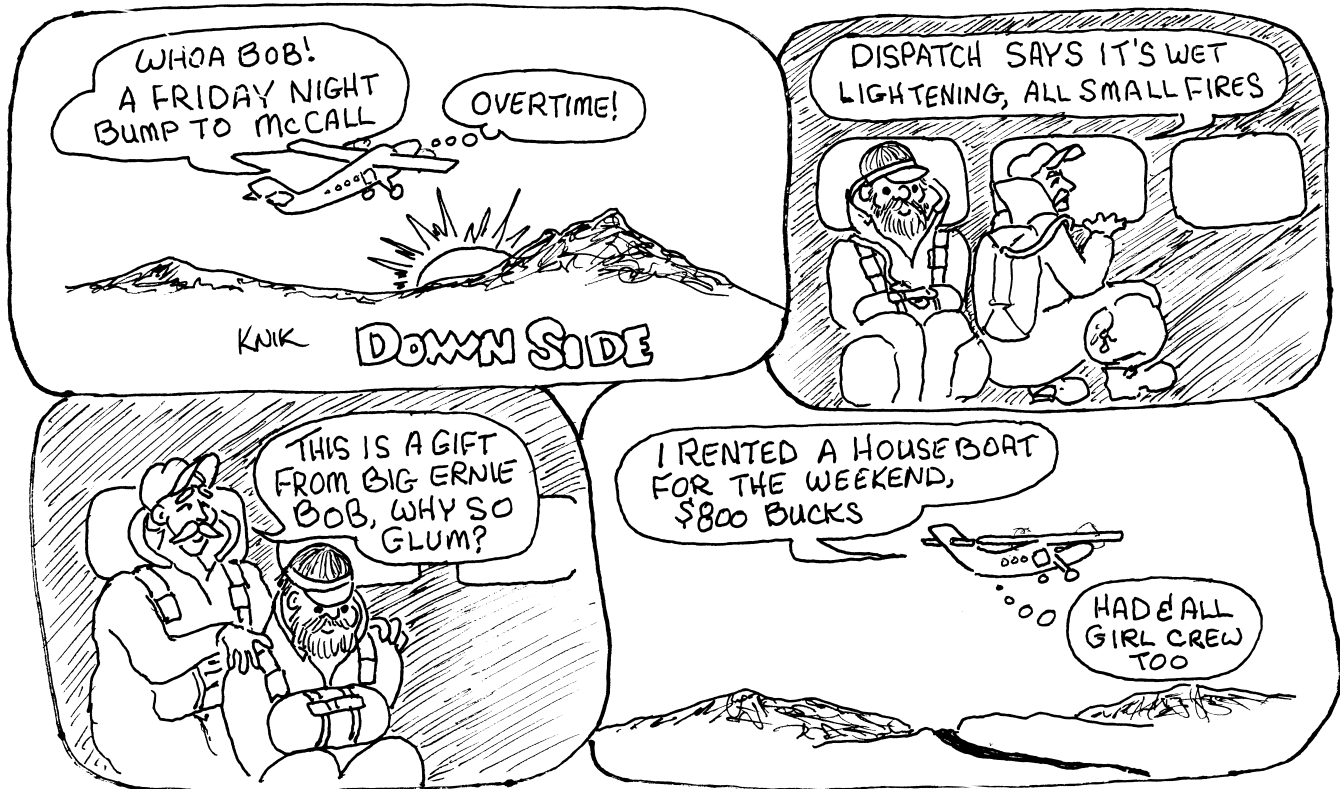
**Robert James Ellis, Jr.** (Missoula '98) was critically injured in an automobile accident on Highway 200 east of Missoula in early February. He was driving a Toyota, which was hit head-on by a driver who drifted into his lane. Ellis' leg was crushed, his collarbone and other leg broken, and his lungs were bruised. He spent a week in intensive care. He may be reached at his home at P.O. Box 994, Seeley Lake, MT 59868-0994.

*When was the first time the entire Missoula crew jumped in one day?*

**Fred Donner** (Missoula '59) says it was August 1, 1959. "There were about 150 jumpers jumped with all jumpers being called in from project work. Still there were calls coming in. **Ray Schenck** (Missoula '56) and I were the last available, so we chose a two-manner on the Bitterroot Divide. I believe it was the next day that the Tri-Motor hit the fuel barrels at Moose Creek and killed **Jon Rolf** (Missoula '57) and **Gary Williams** (Missoula '59)."

**Karl Brauneis** (Missoula '77), currently a Forester on the Shoshone N.F., was recently updating fire locations and ran across a fire jumped at an elevation of 10,100 feet on the Lander District. On August 22, 1974, **Steve Clairmont** (Missoula '62) and **Ted Kamrud** (Missoula '66) jumped the Grave Lake Fire (Shoshone N.F., Wyoming). Is this the highest jump spot? How about some of you New Mex jumpers?

**The third National Forest Service reunion will be Sept. 4-8 in Missoula.** Sponsors say the event will be "long on visiting and meeting old comrades, and short on formalities, with plenty of activities to satisfy desires from visiting with friends, taking a walking tour, rafting the Clark Fork River, a day hike in the Rattlesnake Wilderness, or getting your personal history interview on tape." Registration information may be obtained from James Freeman, c/o Bitterroot RC&D, 1709 N. First St., Hamilton, MT 59840, phone (406) 363-5450, Ext. 117.



**Redding Base Manager Arlen Cravens** informs us that retired smokejumper **Dick Tracy** (Missoula '53) is undergoing treatment for emphysema and has been operated on at the Irvine (Calif.) Medical Center.

**Delos Dutton** (Missoula '51) has done some research and cleared up the rumored smokejumper fatality at Cave Junction during 1976. Steve Finley, a rappeller from Prineville, Ore., was killed during a snag-falling class.

**Ron Stoleson** (Missoula '56) has passed along the word that **Joe West** (Missoula '56) is recovering nicely after triple by-pass surgery in February.

*Thought C-rations were bad?* **Russian smokejumpers** jump with the barest of necessities. They carry shovel and axe heads without handles. They have to cut handles before starting work. Their own cook and hunter also jump with them.

**Batman** was still in the comic book stage when **Bob Nolan** (Cave Junction '47) was spreading his wings 4,000 feet over Seats Field in southern Oregon in the early 50s. Decked out with nylon webbing attached to his body, Bob became a human glider in free fall before opening at 2,000 feet. Jumper pilot **Ed Scholz** did the flying while foreman **Cliff Marshall** (Cave Junction '46) and fellow jumper **Paul Block** (Cave Junction '48) observed from the ground. This early stage parachute experimentation was done in the off-season. **Block** is rumored to have been the developer of the ascension parachute or para-sail, which is used as a thrill ride in resorts around the world. **Block's** whereabouts are currently unknown to the NSA.

Any readers who were in attendance at **Reunion 2000** in Redding probably enjoyed the Kendall-Jackson wine that was placed on your dinner table. We can thank **Don Baker** (Missoula '65). Even while working in far off Chile, Don made the arrangements for a 45-case donation from the Santa Rosa winery.

Many of you are wearing the new Smokejumper belt buckle designed by **Doug Beck** (Cave Junction '70) especially for the reunion. The design and detail are exquisite. From the Bronze, to the Silver Plate, to the Ultimate (Gold/Silver Plate) buckle, they were great! All three will now be added to our webstore and our merchandise insert. Thanks to Doug for the extensive effort in developing this buckle.

Word has filtered down from Fairbanks that **Murry Taylor** (Redding '65) has passed the "dreaded BLM PT test" for the last time. He cruised the last of the three-mile run to finish with 25 seconds to spare, timing in at 22:05. By the time you read this, Murry will be on the book tour circuit with his new book *Jumping Fire*.

Welcome to **Les Domingos** (North Cascades '64) who just became NSA Life Member number 41. **Dennis "Big D" Golik** (McCall '74) was lifer number 40. Dennis, the perennial GS-6 chainsaw specialist, is wondering when the "overhead" will become life members.

*Smokejumper* magazine's call for illustrators was answered by several of our members. In this issue you will see the work of **Nick Holmes** (Redding '79) with the "Snowshoe Packoff" feature. Nick will also add his pictorial work with the "Down Side" humor of the jumper culture. Nick says: "When I trained as a rookie, I was the old guy at 30. It was a tough haul but I had a lot of help. I was fortunate to have more than one 'mentor.' This strip is dedicated to a group of guys who made it possible for me to enjoy six years of smokejumping. This includes Perk, Rye, Mike Spagnolla, and the Dicky Linebarger school of smokejumping. Special thanks to Bob Harris, who just retired after 23 years of jumping." You will also be seeing illustrations from **Bob Wilson** (Missoula '57) and **Dan Veenendaal** (Associate) in future issues. These pagebreaks will add to the magazine and help our attention deficit readers.

The July 22nd **Tom DeJong Memorial** has been postponed and will be rescheduled.

Two Hollywood production companies are working with NSA officers and members on a pair of smokejumper stories for the Historical Channel. One, on the Mann Gulch Fire of 1949 that killed 12 jumpers and a fire guard, will feature, among others, **Bob Sallee** (Missouri '49), last living survivor of the disaster. Tentative broadcast date is Aug. 14 in the channel's "History Alive" series. The second feature, part of a series called "Suicide Missions," is just getting underway. Its producers will be interviewing Redding Reunion attendees. The hour-long program will probably not be broadcast until February 2001. 🍷



# OBITUARIES

We want to know! If you learn of the serious illness or death of a member of the smokejumper community, whether or not he or she is a member, your Association wants to know about it. We would like to express your Associations's sentiments and spread the word to

others. Please phone, write or email our Missoula headquarters and/or our webmaster (webmaster-@smokejumpers.com) including the name, address and phone number of the subject's next of kin. We'll take it from there.

## **RICHARD HARDING BAUMAN** (Missoula '46)

Dick, 74, died March 22, 2000 of cancer. He grew up and went to school in Alexander, N.D. and served in Naval Aviation from March 1943 through Oct. 1945. He jumped from 1946 through 1948 while attending Montana State University from which he was graduated with a forestry degree in 1949. He worked for the Bureau of Land Management as an environmental specialist and retired from that agency in Portland, Ore. in 1980. He lived with his wife Betty Jo in Newberg, Ore.

He was a skier, hunter, fisherman and horseman, a member of the Yamill County Sheriff's Posse and president of Oregon Equestrian Trails for six years. Dick was also a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Newberg, a Mason, past master of the Newberg Lodge and the Newberg Lions Club. He was an active Shriner and a frequent volunteer at the Shriners' Children's Hospital in Portland.

His wife of 49 years, a son, two daughters, fire grandchildren and one great-grandchild survive Dick. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Betty Jo Bauman, 28300 NE Bell Rd., Newberg, OR 97132. Memorial contributions may be made to the First Presbyterian Church in Newberg, the Shriners' Children's Hospital, or the American Cancer Society, c/o Attrell's Funeral Chapel, 207 Villa Rd., Newberg, OR 97132.

## **LANCE CPL. ADAM CHRISTOPHER NEELY BOESEL**

Cpl. Boesel died April 8, 2000 in the crash of a Marine Corps Osprey aircraft while on a training exercise in Arizona. He was proudly serving his country in the Marine Corps stationed at Camp Pendleton, Calif. The accident also claimed 18 other Marines.

Adam was born July 25, 1977 to Patricia and **Ronald Neely** (North Cascades '74) in Okanogan, Wash. Ron was killed in a forest fire near Conconully, Wash. two days after Adam's birth. At the time of his death, Ron, superintendent of a 20-person crew, was scouting, then trapped in a blowup.

Patti, the North Cascades Base business management assistant, married **Craig Boesel** (North Cascades '66) in May 1978. They made their home at a ranch near Winthrop that Adam helped create with many hours of labor with his Dad and brothers. Adam was graduated from Liberty Bell High School in 1995. He enjoyed sports, particularly baseball and football, snowboarding and hunting. He also enjoyed being part of the volunteer fire department. After graduation, he attended Spokane Falls Community College. In Jan. 1997 Adam enlisted and while stationed in San Diego, married Jennifer Randolph, mother of one-year-old Elizabeth. They were planning their return to Winthrop to live and raise their family.

He is survived by his wife and stepdaughter, Mother Patricia Weaver and husband Mike Weaver of Omak, Wash., Dad Craig Boesel, and numerous other relatives. A military service and burial were conducted in Winthrop. Memorials in Adam's name can be made to the Education/Service Fund at Farmer's State Bank, PO Box 489, Winthrop, WA. 98862, or a charity of choice. Condolences may be sent to Craig Boesel at RR1, Box 265, Winthrop, WA 98862.

## **JOHN D. GARNER** (Smokejumper Pilot)

John D. Garner, 56, a BLM-Boise jumper pilot from 1970 to 1973, died Feb. 6, 2000 at Laurel Regional Hospital, Md. after a heart attack. John was a con-

sultant to government agencies and private corporations on the marketing, selling and purchasing of aircraft and aviation equipment. A former systems engineer, he was president of Aviation Analysts International Inc., a company he founded in 1984. He also wrote technical articles on aircraft performance and cost analysis. John was born in Iowa City, Iowa, raised in Coos Bay, Ore., graduated from Oregon State University and received a doctorate in air transport engineering from the Cranfield Institute of Technology in Bedford, England. He was a member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and the Society of Cost Estimating and Analysis. Survivors include his wife, Regina Garner of Laurel; two brothers and a sister. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Regina Garner, 8406 Snowden Oaks Pl., Laurel, MD 20708-2302

## **DAVID JOHN LISTON** (Fairbanks '98)

David, 28, died April 29, 2000 on Fort Wainwright near Fairbanks, Alaska, where he worked as a smokejumper for the Bureau of Land Management's Alaska Fire Service. He was on a refresher jump and his parachute failed to open.

Liston was born April 17, 1972, in Portland, Ore. He attended Gladstone High School, then Clackamas Community College in Oregon City in 1991 and 1992. He began firefighting on the Deschutes National Forest in 1993.

Liston went to Alaska in 1995 to work with the Alaska Fire Service as a member of the Midnight Sun Hot Shots. He worked with that crew until 1996 when he was recruited to train aspiring hotshots as a squad boss on the North Star Fire Crew. He was selected for the Alaska smokejumpers in 1998.

Liston's interests included snowboarding, camping, fishing and exploring.

He loved the freedom and openness of Alaska. He and his wife, Kristin, recently purchased property in the North Pole area.

His fellow smokejumpers will remember him for his free spirit, positive attitude, and always doing more than what was expected. His goal since he began firefighting was to become a smokejumper. His family takes comfort in that he passed away doing something he loved.

Liston leaves his wife Kristin of Fairbanks; his mother and stepfather, Susan Liston and David Sleight of Gladstone, Ore; his father and stepmother, John and Kamie Liston of Bend, Ore; five brothers, two sisters and maternal and paternal grandparents.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made in lieu of flowers, to an account for Kristin. Checks should be made payable to: "In Memory of David Liston," and mailed to the Fort Wainwright Federal Credit Union, Attn: Tracy Jessen, P.O. Box 35025, Fort Wainwright, AK 99703.

#### **Paul F. Wilde, (McCall '46)**

Paul, 76, of McCall died April 17, 2000 of kidney failure. Paul was born May 3, 1923, in East Lansing, Mich. At an early age his family moved to Idaho where his father was a Forest Service ranger at New Meadows. After attending school in New Meadows and McCall, he enlisted in the Army and served as an infantryman with the 3rd Army in France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia during World War II. Upon his discharge, he returned to McCall and married Lois Close in 1946.

His first job upon his return, and the one of which he was most proud, was as a smokejumper. Paul jumped through 1947. After working for a lumber company for a number of years, he returned to the Forest Service in McCall and worked as the road maintenance supervisor until he retired in 1983.

Survivors include his wife, two sons, two daughters and a brother, Ralph, who was also a McCall smokejumper from 1946 to 1949. Condolences may be sent to Mrs. Lois Wilde, P.O. Box 2201, McCall, ID 83638-2201.

## **A Tribute to Wayne Webb**

**July 21, 1925 – Nov. 7, 1999**

**By The Rev. Dr. Stan Tate (McCall '53)**



*Stan Tate*

I ASKED SEVERAL smokejumpers to write this article. They declined saying, "Just say he was the "best of the best" and "a man for all men." I admire and respect Wayne Webb more than any other man I've known.

McCall smokejumpers have recently lost irreplaceable persons like **Max Allen** (Missoula '48), **Paperlegs Peterson** (McCall '47), **Miles Johnson** (McCall '53) **Ken Smith** (Missoula '46), **Jim Thrash** (McCall '81), **Roger Roth** (McCall '92) and others. However, Wayne was the most compelling and authentic leader among them. And McCall has been blessed with outstanding base managers, **Lloyd Johnson**, **Reid Jackson** (McCall '49) **Del Catlin** (McCall '47), and **Neal Davis** (McCall '69).

We identify with the McCall movie, *Telephone Creek*. In the opening scene a lanky Wayne Webb greets the "Neds" and walks them up the hill to the silver barracks. For years our privilege to be included began and ended with him. I thank God his picture is now in the "Wayne Webb Parachute Loft." It reminds us that his spirit will always be among us. I was honored to give the dedicatory prayer, knowing his warm presence will always be there, radiating competence and friendship.

Shortly before he died, he told me the loft dedication was the highest honor he had ever experienced, with one exception. That was the day in 1945 when he returned from World War II that Wilma said she'd marry him. They enjoyed a great marriage for over 50 years and had four children, Terry, Randy, Marsha, and Michael. I watched all of them grow up in McCall where I was a priest. I officiated at Michael's burial years ago.

Wayne jumped from 1946 to 1975, amassing 300 jumps with 175 on forest fires. In Missoula, he presented a jumper helmet to President Eisenhower. **Jim Rush** (McCall '65) described Wayne in Eisenhower's words: "The supreme quality for a leader is unquestionable integrity. His teachings and actions must square."

As loft foreman and parachute technician he was a perfectionist, for which we were all grateful. **Austin "Bear" Young** (McCall '54), who learned to pack from him, said, "He did it all with the skills of a brain surgeon," repeating, "If anything is worth doing at all, give it your very best."

Del Catlin, another outstanding leader who worked with Wayne for 30 years said; "Wayne put his heart and soul into that loft. I consider him the most knowledgeable parachute man I've ever known."

**John Magel** (McCall '58) pointed to Wayne's humor. Like the time after the loft dedication, Wayne said, "now we'll have to think lofty thoughts." Magel and his squad were about ready to collapse after jumping off the back of a pickup doing Allen rolls. Suddenly, out of nowhere, Wayne appeared with a red rubber band around his nose, and they all had a good laugh. That's what Wayne did every day, find ways to give us strength to run when we could hardly walk.

Remember the words of the chaplain during the Battle of the Bulge? "The Lord shall renew you and you shall mount up with wings like eagles." Visitors to Wayne's room at the VA hospital come away with renewed hopes after going there to give him a lift. He never stopped giving.

Smokejumper veteran **Ray Beasley** (McCall '52) called Wayne a warrior throughout his entire life. As soon as he could, Wayne enlisted in the 82nd Airborne. He spent his 19th Christmas in the Battle of the Bulge during the most severe winter in 40 years. Words cannot express how much we owe to men like these who fought for our country to preserve freedom. Wayne exemplifies all the courageous military men and women who have served with valor.

His courageous battle with amyloidosis and myeloma personifies the human drive to live abundantly during difficult times. Perhaps Wayne's daughter Marsha speaks for smokejumpers everywhere. "Papa was my hero who strengthened my desire to be the best person I could be." His son Terry wrote a ballad, which he presented at the memorial service. It contained this:

"There's a place where lightning kindles flames  
Where brave men leap from soaring firefighter planes  
Into trees which explode in the steep rugged terrain  
It's the danger domain of Smokejumper Wayne."

We are fortunate to have worked in the many domains of our beloved Wayne Webb. As long as we have life, when we hear the word "smokejumper" we will think of him, the best of the best.

# A SNOWSHOE PACK-OFF

By Wayne R. Webb, (McCall '46)

**I**n May 1973, 10 McCall jumpers were sent to Redmond, Ore. to help with a mini-bust of lightning-caused fires. The first eight were jumped on two-manners the day after we arrived, leaving me and my partner, **Gary Benavidez** (McCall '72) without a call. Finally, four days later, we were dispatched to a reported smoke near Crater Lake.

In retrospect, the only reason we jumped was the fact that I'd been grounded for seven years because of the 40-year age limit that had recently been rescinded. Upon reaching the ground, (we both treed up) we found four feet of snow covering most of a downed log that was sending up a wisp of smoke. After 20 minutes of packing snow in the cavity and a minimum of chopping, we radioed the lookout that the fire was out. He told us to expect a helicopter in about two hours, so we cut some small trees and logs to make a platform on the snow in a small clearing nearby.

The 'copter arrived right on schedule but, after a couple of half-hearted landing attempts, it went away. The pilot said he didn't think he could land safely on our platform but would be back shortly with directions on how to get to a road south of us. He returned in about an hour and dropped two pairs of snowshoes and a rough sketch of what he thought would be the easiest way to get to where a vehicle would pick us up.

Having grown up in southern New Mexico, Gary was not too familiar with snowshoes but after several tumbles into tree wells, some of them back first, we managed about four miles. At 9 p.m., with it getting dark, no road and no idea how much farther we had to go, we made camp in about a foot of snow. The next morning we discovered we had lost the air net radio and Gary backtracked to find it while I leapfrogged the packs until he returned. We then hiked to the road, which was nearly free of snow. About a half-mile later we met the pickup, which returned us to Redmond. 🐾

*Note: This story was written by Wayne Webb and submitted as one of the Top 10 Smokejumper Stories for the 1998 55<sup>th</sup> reunion of the Region 4 Smokejumpers in McCall. Webb had*

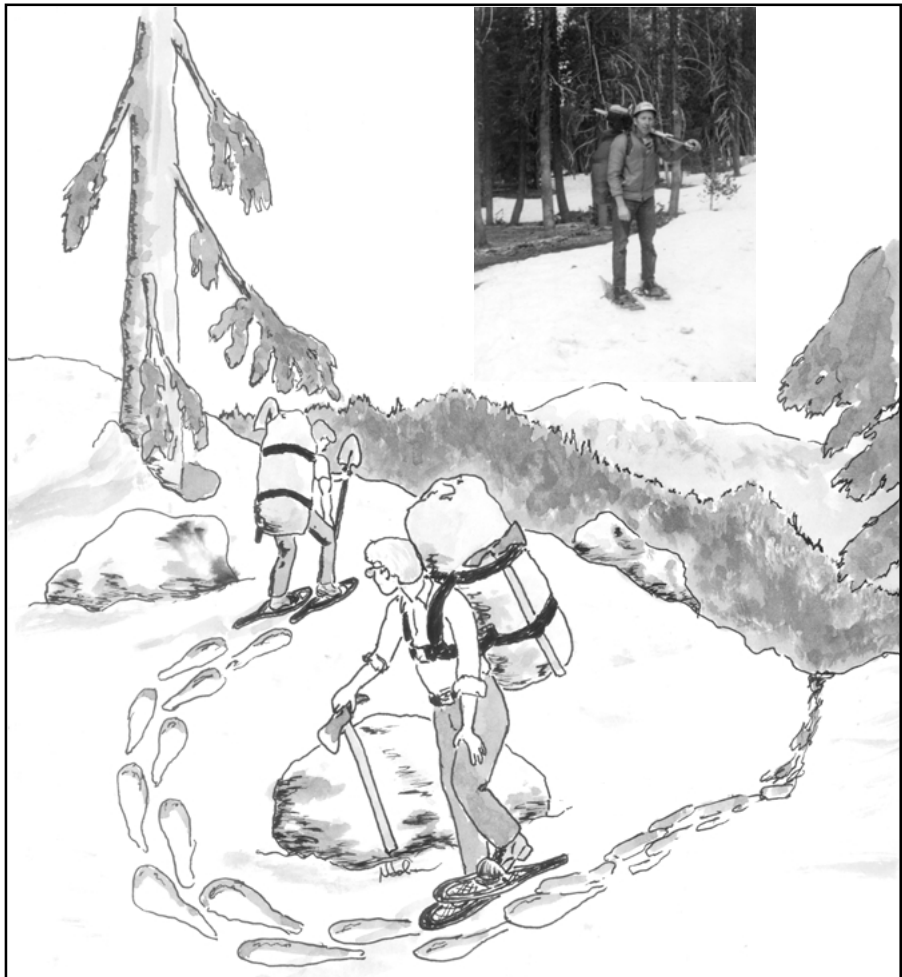


Illustration courtesy Nick Holmes. Photo of Wayne Webb (above) courtesy Leo Cromwell.

*turned 40 on July 21, 1965. Four days earlier, Paul Bradley (McCall 65), Jon Petterson (McCall 64), Carl Brown (McCall 65), and Webb jumped the Jeannot Creek Fire. In December 1972, the Forest Service Manual was revised to remove the age 40 limitation on parachute jumping, and on May 19, 1973, Webb finally jumped again, on the fire described above in the Deschutes National Forest*

**Deadline for  
articles, news and  
features for the October  
issue of *Smokejumper* is  
August 1**

# Some Casual Reflections on Early Jumping

By Neil Shier (Cave Junction '46)

**W**e were the first post-World War II group of smokejumpers. The boss was **Merle Lundrigan** (Missoula '41) and the squadleaders were **Cliff Marshall** (Cave Junction '46) and **Bill Green** (Missoula '45). I was hired in May, right after my discharge from the Navy, and joined the Aerial Project because the lookout job that I had before the war was taken.

I joined a group that left from Grants Pass, Ore. bound for Missoula. Under Marshall's leadership, the group included **Danny On**, **Richard Corson**, **Ed Adams**, **Danny O'Rourke**, **Paul Hankins**, **John Thach**, **Andy Henry**, "**Doc**" **Middleton** and several others.

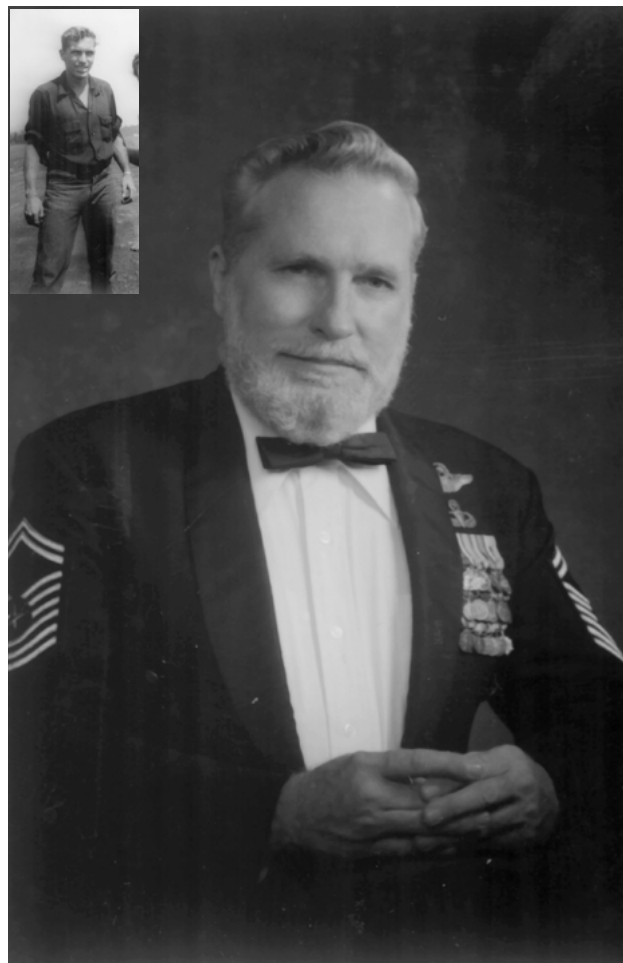
When we arrived at Missoula, we were trucked to Nine Mile Camp and joined a large group of trainees in what looked like Civilian Conservation Corps barracks. Most were vets, many from airborne outfits. Cliff Marshall and John Thach had been in the 82nd Airborne. Cliff was one of the few who had three combat jumps (Sicily, D-Day and Market Garden). Dick Corson was with the airborne Marines in the South Pacific; Danny On was with the 101st; Eddie Adams had been part of the 17th Airborne Corps. I had been a combat air crewman in TBF Avenger aircraft in the Pacific.

The training was fairly simplistic. The "jump tower" was a rope thrown over a tree limb with one end secured to the tree and the other to the trainee's harness. One jumped off a platform and when the rope became fully extended, *voila*, opening shock! I think **Frank Derry**, (Missoula '40), **Wag Dodge** (Missoula '41) and **Francis Lufkin** (North Cascades '40) worked in the parachute loft adjoining the tree letdown area.

Upon completion of training, we returned to Cave Junction and lived in tent frame units behind the Redwood Ranger Station. Our primary jump rig was the 28-foot flat circular Derry with a few Eagle canopies mixed in. Reserves were standard 22-foot/24-foot chest types. **Bob Benesh** and **Steve Ayers** were our pilots and flew the Norduyn Norseman airplane for us that summer.

I was the only "home town" person in the group, being from Grants Pass. On weekends the men would use my mom's and dad's house as headquarters, crashing on the floor and using the washing machine and shower. My folks were totally enchanted by those men.

Because I happened to be the person who answered the phone in the mess hall, I was selected to make the first fire



*Neil T. Shier in 1946 and retirement photo in 1980. (Photos courtesy Neil Shier)*

jump in 1946. The fire was a lightning strike on the top of a steep ridge in the Trinity Alps in Northern California. It was a pretty routine trip going south until the pilot flew a fuel tank dry and the sudden silence caused some puckering among the jumpers. The pilot switched to a full tank and restarted the engine and the rest was routine. The fire was one of the "out by ten o' clock" variety. 🦋

*Neil retired from the USAF as a chief master sergeant in 1975 with 30 years' federal service. During his Air Force career, he had 387 jumps. He served in various jobs including rescue team commander and command loadmaster and was a crewmember on the first USAF aircraft to fly over the South Pole in October 1958. Neil lives in Grants Pass.*



# Jump List— April 2000

By **Larry Lufkin** (Cave Junction '63), VICE-PRESIDENT

*The Jump List is a compilation of information the NSA receives from members, associates, and friends. It is intended to inform our readers, what jumpers are doing and where they reside. You can mail your information to Larry Lufkin: 7101 Alderwood Ct. SE, Olympia, WA 98503 or send e-mail to [jumpercj63@aol.com](mailto:jumpercj63@aol.com). Phone (360) 459-2534*

## Alaska

**Leonard Wehking**, '85, is the fire management officer for the BLM's Carson District. He lives in Carson City, Nev.

**Guy W. Leadbetter**, '81, is a professor at Mesa College in Colorado and lives in Junction City.

**Gary R. "Pops" Johnson**, '74, lives in Carson City where he works for the Carson District of the BLM. He is married and has two daughters 13 and 16. Gary said he made several jumps with another Gary Johnson who jumped out of Redding. The identical names caused confusion so he became 'pops' while the other Gary Johnson was known as 'gramps.'

**Walt Vennum**, '62, lives in Sebastopol, Calif. He is a professor of geology at Sonoma State University in Santa Rosa. He earned a Ph.D. in geology from Stanford and has worked for the U.S. Geological Survey in Alaska, Antarctica and Saudi Arabia.

## Boise

**Dave Easton**, '92, lives in Carson City where he is an engine supervisor for the BLM. Dave, who jumped out of Boise for two years, transferred to Carson as an engine captain in 1994.

## Cave Junction

**John R. Lindlan**, '52, retired as a dentist. He lives in New Brighton, Minn.

## McCall

**Clay Wright**, '79, is a Vice President for Key Corp. Previously, he was a program manager in aerospace systems for Argo Tech Corp. He lives in Chesterland, Ohio.

**Robert V. Shoemaker**, '76, jumped out of McCall until 1996 when he became a US Forest Service fire prevention officer. Robert lives in McCall and works in nearby Cascade, Idaho.

**Neil Satterwhite**, '65, retired from the US Army in 1968 from Vietnam combat injuries. He returned to smokejumping during which time he earned a degree in counseling and is now a vocational and career counselor for Idaho State University. He lives in Pocatello.

**John S. Mowery**, '64, reports that he is in his 33<sup>rd</sup> year of teaching in public schools in Idaho and California. John lives in Nampa, Idaho

**Gordon M. Dickinson**, '63, received his MD from the University of Utah and worked as a medical doctor for several years. He is on the faculty of the University of Miami's School of Medicine and lives in Miami, Fla.

**Don R. Webb**, '56, worked for the Forest Service as a forest dispatcher, zone dispatcher, regional fire coordinator, fire management officer and incident commander. Don, who lives in Silver City, N.M., retired in 1984 from the Gila National Forest. He goes deep-sea fishing in the winter in Mexico and fly fishes in the summer.

**Bud M.C. Filler**, '52, lives in Boise. Bud worked for Boise Cascade and Potlatch Corporations before starting his own private companies. He is still in the forest products business and recently wrote a book "Two Man Stick" that will be available at the Redding Reunion.

**Jac E. Caward**, '51, lives in Prescott Valley, Ariz. He retired 13 years ago and is enjoying his retirement by landscaping his own property.

**Robert Stutzman**, '45, retired in 1985 as a cartographer for the Oregon State Highways Department. He lives in Salem.

## Missoula

**Sarah R. Doehring**, '91, lives in Florence, Mont. and continues to jump. Sarah, who has a degree in geography from the University of Montana, also jumped one year at Grangeville.

**Miguel E. Gomez**, '80, lives in Albuquerque where he works as a materials handler. He jumped out of Missoula for 13 years.

**Willis Curdy**, '71 has jumped for 29 years out of Missoula where he currently lives.

**Bud (Conald) Clark**, '64, retired as a smokejumper in 1993 after being injured. He lives in Missoula and builds and repairs fly rods.

**Robert Marcom**, '63, lives in Waupaca, Wisc. and is in the computer business.

**Stanley W. Linnertz**, '61, lives in Lincoln, Neb. and is sales director for a firm that does training for trucking companies.

**Douglas E. Daniels**, '61, established his own company Daniels & Associates in Belgrade, Mont. where he lives. Douglas, who has a degree in engineering, worked for several engineering firms before starting his own. He also

established "MONTMAPS", landowner reference maps and large state maps for classroom use.

**William K. Samsel**, '61, jumped one year then worked as a pilot for Johnson Flying Service and several other companies. Bill quit flying in 1996 but is still managing the business that he developed to support his flying habit.

**Carl Gidlund**, '58, president of the NSA, retired in 1998 as public affairs officer for the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. He also retired that year from the Air Force Reserve as a lieutenant colonel. His active and reserve career of 33 years in the Army and Air Force included a Vietnam tour. He earned two journalism degrees from the University of Montana and has won several writing and public relations awards. Carl lives in Hayden Lake, Idaho with his wife Sally.

**Lee G. Lipscomb**, '58, says he has a 9-week old baby at home so he'll be retiring in 2017. Lee has been an attorney in private practice in the Los Angeles area since 1974. He lives in Los Angeles.

**Edward K. Courtney**, '58, retired in 1994 and is staying busy. Ed lives in Missoula.

**Dan M. Hensley**, '57, has two years to go before he can retire. Dan, who lives in West Hills, Calif. has worked as a Los Angeles County schoolteacher, as a guide for Hensley's Sierra Adventures and as a bodyguard.

**Robert W. (Bob) Hewitt**, '56, lives in Memphis where he says he is not completely retired. Bob, who has a doctorate in dental surgery from the University of Tennessee, has been in private practice since 1964. He spends time each summer backpacking and fly-fishing in Montana.

**Lewis T. Leath**, '56, is a retired claims adjuster. He lives in Galesville, Ala.

**Edward G. Lufkin**, '56, is a medical specialist in Rochester, Minn.

**Dr. Cole L. MacPherson**, '55, earned a degree in dentistry from the University of Oregon and has worked in general dentistry since then. He lives in Missoula.

**Edmund J. Mannion**, '54, is a teacher at Chico State University and says that he will retire soon. Ed lives in Chico, Calif.

## Nine Mile

**David P. Lodzinski**, '51, lives in Vale, Ore. after retiring from the Bureau of Land Management.

**Joseph F. McDonald**, '51, retired as a school principal, coach and teacher in 1993. He is currently the President of Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, Mont. Joseph, who has a doctorate from the University of Montana, lives in Ronan.

**Tom Clawson**, '50, lives in West St. Paul, Minn. Tom is trying to start a Minnesota Chapter of the NSA. Any jumpers in that area can call the Missoula office and request Tom's address and phone number.

**Rodney W. Leicht**, '51, retired as a police officer. He currently lives in Chino Hill, Calif.

**Dewey W. Secrist**, '48, is retired and lives in Newtown Square, Penn. Dewey says he plays a little golf and has had two holes in one, which are rare birds. He also does some trout fishing in local streams. He reports that he and his wife

of 54 years raised three children and they are now enjoying nine grand children and one great grand child.

**Philip D. Davis**, '48, retired in Jan. 1992 after 31 years with IBM Corp. in New York, California, and Montana. After serving as NSA secretary for several years, he currently does a lot of volunteer work, skis, backpacks, and raises a garden. Phil lives in Missoula.

**Clyde M. Hughes**, '47, retired in 1991 as the manager of a plant in Roseburg, Ore. Clyde, who lives in Green Valley, Ariz., travels, backpacks and camps.

**William F. Mitchell**, '47, lives in Shady Cove, Ore.

**Gordon H. Matheson**, '47, lives in Conrad, Mont.

**Emory L. Garber**, '43, retired in June 1990 after a career as a pastor. After retirement, he moved to Legrand, Calif. where he currently lives. Since then, he has served the Foursquare Church in a variety of jobs. Emory recently celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## North Cascades

**Ronald E. Loney**, '57, lives in Albany, Ore.

**Richard B. (Dick) Wildman**, '61, lives in Boise since retiring as a fire management officer in 1986. He worked as an air operations branch director on type I and II overhead fire assignments for another 11 years. Dick says he spent over 40 years on fires.

## Redding

**Diane Pryce**, '83, worked on the Los Padres National Forest as an engine operator. She moved to Carson City in 1997 and has been full time air attack since then. Diane, who lives in Carson City, was the first female jumper in Redding and Alaska.

**Doug Swantner**, '82, worked in the Elko BLM District as an aircraft dispatcher before moving to Carson City. He also ran the Stead air tanker base for two years. He is now the district aviation manager. Doug lives in Meadow Valley, Calif.

**Marty A. Mastagni**, '70, lives in Hollister, Calif. where he is a landscape consultant.

**Lance O. Lollini**, '61, lives in San Carlos, Calif.

## Redmond

**Morgan R. Leach**, '83, lives in Great Falls, Mont. and works as an optometrist.

**Dan Mitchell**, '78, left jumping and went to the Tahoe National Forest. He is now an engine captain and runs the Fish Springs Station in the Carson City District for the BLM. Dan lives in Truckee, Calif.

**Dale R. Lehnertz**, '78, operates an appliance repair business. He lives in Redmond, Ore.

## West Yellowstone

**Derek Hansen**, '95, lives in Missoula. Derek trained at West Yellowstone in 1995 but has jumped out of Missoula since 1996. Prior to jumping, Derek was with several hotshot crews in California.

## Pilots

**Dale L. Larrabee** dropped jumpers and retardant out of Redding in 1958 and 1959. Dale, who lives in Almanor, Calif., is a retired college professor.

# BLM Policies Force Fire Official's Retirement

By John N. Maclean

*Wildland Firefighter Magazine*

BOISE, Idaho—The Bureau of Land Management's top wildland fire manager decided to retire early, effective April 1, after a lengthy dispute with the BLM that he says involved pressure to place inexperienced women and minorities in senior fire jobs.

Lester K. Rosenkrance, 59, held the post of director of fire and aviation for the BLM at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho, for five years. His replacement is Larry Hamilton, formerly BLM state director for Montana and the Dakotas.

Rosenkrance said in an interview that a year ago in March the deputy director of the BLM, Nina Hatfield, told him he would have to "take the consequences" unless he named a woman or minority as helicopter operations specialist at NIFC, the BLM's top helicopter post. She told him that failure to do so would result in "a black eye" for him.

When Rosenkrance told Hatfield governmental policy required him to base his selection on merit, she told him to turn the job into a "trainee" position so that a woman or minority could qualify.

Rosenkrance said he refused on grounds it was "unreasonable" to make the top helicopter job a trainee position. "There's no way I can do that in good conscience," he recalled telling her. "There's a safety factor. I have to make the selection based on merit.

"Her next comment was, I'd better do something to get a woman or minority in that position or face the consequences." Rosenkrance said on several occasions Hatfield complained to him that, "You've got all these white males around you."

BLM policy requires that fire managers meet qualifications "based on program complexity" and that fresh vacancies be filled "with individuals who meet these qualifications."

After advertising the helicopter job throughout the federal government, Rosenkrance hired Kevin Hamilton, who had been the BLM's top aviation official in Arizona, for the post.

Rosenkrance said he had come under criticism for several years about not doing enough to diversify the BLM's fire workforce. He said the issue arose many times with Tom Fry, acting director of the BLM, as well as with Hatfield.

Fry and Hatfield declined comment. A spokeswoman for the BLM in Washington, D.C. said Rosenkrance's charges involve "privacy and personnel" issues that are "inappropriate to respond to in a public forum."

Rosenkrance's resignation came as no surprise at NIFC, where his departure had been rumored for months. Rosenkrance was known to be at odds with BLM headquarters in Washington and engaged in a turf war of long-standing with the Forest Service over authority for wildland fire operations.

Rosenkrance, it is said, created an old-boy network or "Alaskan mafia" at NIFC of men he had worked with during several tours for the BLM in Alaska. Some of those men were highly qualified, but others seemed more like cronies, in the

opinion of several NIFC sources who asked not to be named.

Hamilton, picked by the BLM to replace Rosenkrance, once served a tour in Alaska for the agency.

Rosenkrance became director of fire and aviation as a consequence of the South Canyon fire, which cost the lives of 14 firefighters on Colorado's Storm King Mountain July 6, 1994. Rosenkrance headed a BLM-Forest Service team that investigated the fire and concluded that the deaths had been caused by a long series of errors, on and off the mountain.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, in a later finding, cited both agencies for "willful neglect" of firefighter safety.

The following year, 1995, Rosenkrance became the BLM's director of fire and aviation at the recommendation of another inter-agency team, this one charged with drawing lessons from the South Canyon fire. Tom Allen, who headed that effort, recommended Rosenkrance for the director's post as a "first step" toward improving the BLM's fire operation.

"When I took over the bureau's fire program, it was in deep trouble," Rosenkrance wrote Fry at one point last year. "Professional firefighters were in short supply and temporary employees were being exploited. We were asking them to do things they shouldn't do. Policy was inconsistent. Budgets were dwindling. There was no accountability."

Rosenkrance began to address these issues, particularly accountability, a watchword for firefighter safety. A conference on accountability that he organized earlier this year drew 200 participants.

At one point, he convinced Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt that money for prescribed fire, always in short supply, could be found in the fire suppression budget. It would make sense, he told Babbitt, to use suppression dollars to help prevent catastrophic fire by conducting prescribed fires.

"Babbitt bought into it, he ran with it," Rosenkrance said.

But as time passed Rosenkrance began to hear rumors critical of him and to sense a "lack of support."

"I kept getting a lot of criticism that we weren't doing enough to diversify the workforce," Rosenkrance said in the interview. "We're not that far out of line with other federal agencies.

"There are some shortages, primarily women, in the fire community. It's hard to keep women through a career of fire, hard to get them in at the entry level. There are not as many women interested in fire as there are men.

"There are some good women, women smokejumpers and in other programs. You have to keep working at it, you don't diversify overnight."

Rosenkrance said he set up three new hotshot crews to attract minorities. One is in Jacksonville, Miss., a "good place to recruit Afro-Americans"; one in Vale, Ore., a longtime source for Hispanic firefighters; and one in Alaska, designed at Con-



gressional insistence to recruit Alaska natives.

Rosenkrance said he worked with groups representing women and minority firefighters, trying to interest them in wildland fire jobs at the entry level. Those groups, whose primary focus is structure fires, are the National Association of Hispanic Firefighters, Women in Fire Service and the International Association of Professional Black Firefighters.

Matters came to a head last fall. Fry flew from Washington to Boise to meet with Rosenkrance and discuss his future.

On this occasion, Fry asked Rosenkrance when he planned to retire. "We want our person in there," Fry said. He expressed concern for the "legacy" of Interior Secretary Babbitt. The BLM is part of the Interior Department. Fry said he did not want Republicans naming someone to Rosenkrance's post, apparently taking to heart polls at that time showing Vice President Gore lagging his chief Republican challenger, George W. Bush, in the coming year's campaign for the White House.

Rosenkrance told Fry he was enjoying his job and hadn't thought about retirement. Fry gave Rosenkrance several choices, among them designing another job for himself with the BLM.

After Fry left, Rosenkrance put together a proposal to work with a Midwestern university promoting rural fire training. But when Rosenkrance asked Fry for a written guarantee of support, Fry became indignant.

"I said, 'I need something in writing,'" Rosenkrance recalled. "The director then called and said, 'You mean you don't trust me?'"

The two failed to come to agreement.

"I'm very surprised that you were offended," Rosenkrance wrote Fry on Feb.17. "I realize you may have the best of inten-

tions to honor our verbal agreement, but [the job] is for two years, which has a possibility of exceeding your tenure as director."

Rosenkrance's letter expressed additional concerns, about funding and commitment, and concluded, "Therefore, I do not see any way to make further progress without an agreement in writing up front."

Shortly thereafter, the BLM gave Rosenkrance a "directed assignment," meaning he had no choice but to accept the post or leave the agency. He was directed to Washington, D.C. as a special assistant to Fry.

"I decided to hell with it," said Rosenkrance, who then retired.

Rosenkrance began his firefighting career in 1959 in Challis, Idaho. He was a smokejumper based in McCall, Idaho for eight seasons, and served in many senior management positions for the BLM including state director in Arizona.

In a ceremony this past February in Fry's office that now appears ironic, Rosenkrance was named the "Outstanding Public Land Professional" for 1999 by the Public Lands Foundation. In making the award, the foundation noted Rosenkrance's long record of supporting the "welfare of employees throughout the BLM, particularly people who have been affected by wildfire." 🌲

*John N. Maclean is the author of Fire on the Mountain: The True Story of the South Canyon Fire. Prior to that, Maclean was a writer, reporter and editor for the Chicago Tribune. Rosenkrance was a McCall jumper from 1961 through 1968. Subsequently, he served in line and fire management positions throughout his BLM career. This article is printed with the permission of Wildland Firefighter magazine.*

#### THE FOLLOWING HAVE JOINED THE NSA SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF SMOKEJUMPER MAGAZINE

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Crowley, Charles ..... CJ ..... 60	Johnson, Karl ..... RDD ..... 95	Privette, Alvan ..... NCSB ..... 49	



## AIRBORNE DANNY ON

The sky was teal blue,  
Tailing a lightning storm.  
Vapor off the runway  
Heat waves of deform.

We were a little edgy  
At the breakfast that day.  
Hot chocolate preluded  
Smoke streamers assault gray.

The alarm ricocheted  
Off the hangar floor.  
A fist full of firefighters  
Shot out the door.

I was happy to find  
My name on the roster.  
Beneath Danny On's,  
It lacked some luster.

Strapped in our harness  
Helmet in hand,  
We raced to the Nordine  
For no-man's land.

High in the spiny crags  
Forest green turned brown.  
We located where  
The bolt touched down.

Tight amongst the crags  
Laid a narrow brushy slope.  
Not much of a target,  
Offering us little hope.

How beautiful life was  
As we floated away.  
Believe it or not,  
Danny and I even got paid.

—Hal Meili (Cave Junction '52)

*Danny On (Cave Junction '46,  
'47, '52 and '53) was a World War  
II paratrooper who served in the*



*Battle of the Bulge  
and was wounded  
in action. A  
renowned outdoor  
photographer, he  
was silviculturalist  
for the Flathead  
National Forest,  
Mont. when he died  
at the age of 54 in a  
skiing accident in Jan. 1979. Hal  
Meili retired from 25 years of school  
teaching in 1982. He lives on the  
shores of Fish Lake, Wash. where he  
"mostly hunts and fish."*

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION INCOME STATEMENT For the Year Ended December 31, 1999

Income		
Interest Income	\$2,053.11	
<i>Multiyear Membership Funds</i>		
Membership Income	\$9,180.11	
Total Membership Income		\$11,233.22
Net Income from Sales of Merchandise		\$2,860.43
Income From Sales of Video Footage		\$7,848.46
Miscellaneous Income		\$870.00
Total Income		\$22,812.11
Expenses		
Membership Coordinator Expenses	\$1,111.77	
Banking Expenses	\$27.59	
Computer Expenses	\$703.49	
Life Member Expenses	\$234.00	
Newsletter	\$7,613.76	
Office Operating Expenses	\$9,066.82	
Presidential Expenses	778.39	
Equipment Depreciation	\$612.67	
Miscellaneous	\$1,267.00	
Total Expenses		\$21,415.49
Net Income		\$1,396.62

### NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION BALANCE SHEET As of December 31, 1999

Assets		
Short Term Assets		
Checking Account	\$1,543.91	
Primary Savings Account	\$2,618.82	
Total Short Term Assets		\$4,162.73
<i>Restricted Assets</i>		
Museum Fund	\$8,345.88	
Reunion Fund	\$7,545.72	
Video Fund	\$13,644.43	
Video Profits Fund	\$7,958.14	
Art Jukkala Trail Fund	\$3,047.85	
Life Membership Permanent Fund	\$33,907.38	
2-year Membership Fund	\$3,195.23	
5-year Membership Fund	\$7,977.04	
10-year Membership Fund	\$10,863.76	
Total Restricted Assets		\$96,485.43
Equipment	\$1,838.00	
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(\$1,225.34)	
Net Equipment		\$612.66
Total Assets		\$101,260.82
Liabilities and Fund Balance		
Liabilities	\$0.00	
Fund Balance		\$101,260.82
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance		\$101,260.82

## Recognize Any of These Guys?



*Date—the late 1950s. Place—Southern California on a seeding project. (L-R) Jim Allen, Smokey Stover, Wally Tower, and Jim Larkin. Wally doesn't know the next individuals, but Red Myler is leaning against the car. (Photo courtesy Wally Tower)*

## NSA MEMBER PROFILE

- Richard C. "Dick" Eriksson
- Smokejumper: 1960-67—Missoula
- Personal: Resident of Atlanta for more than 25 years ... Earned Master's degree in Business Administration from Western State College, Gunnison, Colo. ... Worked for more than 10 years as representative in motor-truck sales for both Mack Truck Company and IHC ... Worked as an Outward Bound instructor in North Carolina and Georgia ... Enjoyed climbing, rock repelling, boating, hunting, fishing, running, racquetball and tennis ... Unfortunately, Dick is handicapped due to an accident in 1982, but lives independently in Stone Mountain, Ga., where he works regularly with his computer.

Dick is very involved as a volunteer in the Peer Support Program at Shepard Spinal Center in Atlanta. He stays in touch with acquaintances through Outward Bound and the NSA. He enjoys annual outings with his nephew Greg and brother Jim, along with other disabled friends for dove hunts and various other hunting excursions.

According to his sister-in-law, Julie, Dick speaks fondly of his time and experiences as a smokejumper, and misses the mountains, sky and country of Montana.

Dick would very much appreciate hearing from any smokejumpers. Contact him at [rceik@juno.com](mailto:rceik@juno.com) or by telephone at (404) 296-4700. 📞



*Richard C. "Dick" Eriksson, summer 1994.  
(Photo courtesy Julie Eriksson)*

# NSA WEBSITE OFFERS MORE FOR MEMBERS

By Dan McComb

Continuing its efforts serve smokejumpers and the wildfire community, the NSA will offer free Web-based e-mail for its members. Executive Committee members voted unanimously during an April meeting in McCall, Idaho to offer the service, which will provide NSA members at all levels with a free membername@smokejumpers.com account.

The new service will function like the most popular Webmail service, Hotmail. Users can check their e-mail, manage address books, download attachments, and perform other common e-mail tasks, all from within their favorite Web browser. In addition, the service will allow users to check mail on any standard popmail account from any Internet connection.

Executive Committee members voted to purchase a computer to host the service, which will be used by CommerceMax in Seattle. That firm provides the NSA with Web hosting solutions, and has agreed to provide the Webmail service without additional fees in exchange for ownership of the computer after two years' time.

Check the NSA web site at [www.smokejumpers.com](http://www.smokejumpers.com) for more details. 📧

*The author is the NSA's webmaster and an Executive Committee member. He trained at Missoula in 1987 and*

*jumped out of Boise and Fairbanks through 1991. He has a degree in journalism, is a graphics designer and owns Visual Contact through which he does freelance work in Web and traditional design. Dan lives in Seattle.*

## NSA Web Site Offers Members New Free Benefit

NSA members have just earned a new benefit: Each is eligible for an e-mail "handle" that will immediately identify him or her as a smokejumper.

Webmaster **Dan McComb** (Missoula '87) explained that the new program functions similar to the popular Microsoft program "Hotmail." Members who choose to take advantage of the free perquisite will have an account with their name followed by "smokejumpers.com."

"Users can check their e-mail, manage address books, download attachments and perform other common e-mail tasks, all from within their favorite Web browsers," McComb explained.

In addition, he said, the service will allow users to check mail on any standard popmail account from any Internet connection.

Additional information may be obtained from the NSA Website, [www.smokejumpers.com](http://www.smokejumpers.com).



*Smokejumper*  
10 Judy Lane  
Chico, CA 95926

Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Chico, CA Permit 119
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Return Service Requested